



SCHOOL of
GRADUATE STUDIES

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

East Tennessee State University
**Digital Commons @ East
Tennessee State University**

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Student Works

5-2018

Worlds with Words: Discourse and Frame Analysis of Performance Storytelling

Chelise Fox

East Tennessee State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Discourse and Text Linguistics Commons](#), and the [Other Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Fox, Chelise, "Worlds with Words: Discourse and Frame Analysis of Performance Storytelling" (2018). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 3424. <https://dc.etsu.edu/etd/3424>

This Thesis - Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Works at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact digilib@etsu.edu.

Worlds with Words: Discourse and Frame Analysis of Performance Storytelling

A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Reading, Storytelling Concentration

by

Chelise Fox

May 2018

Dr. Joseph Sobol, Chair

Dr. Delanna Reed

Dr. Andrew Herrmann

Keywords: Storytelling, Frame Analysis, Discourse Analysis, Narrative Frame and Boundary,
Storylistening Trance, Discourse Involvement Strategies

ABSTRACT

Worlds with Words: Discourse and Frame Analysis of Performance Storytelling

by

Chelise Fox

In this thesis, I explore how performance storytellers create intense focus on imaginal realities through language—a phenomenon sometimes called “transport” or “realm-shift.” To this end, recordings of performances by two professional storytellers were transcribed and examined through the lens of frame theory and discourse analysis. Examination of these transcripts shows that storytellers employ clusters of linguistic involvement strategies around frame transitions, facilitating realm-shift. Additionally, it shows that throughout a telling, tellers shape discourse around frame shifts that draw attention to significant elements, particularly those that establish a story’s relevance to the occasion of its telling and those that contribute to meaningful story interpretation. This research highlights the ways that meaningful interpretation of a story depends on successful navigation of frames, revealing that the power of a storytelling event depends largely on the connections between realms of discourse.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Joseph Sobol, for his unfailing support and assistance. His penetrating insight has been invaluable, and I owe completion of this thesis to his tireless encouragement and coaching. Even after leaving East Tennessee State University, he continued to work with me to see this thesis through. The George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling Research at the University of South Wales has gained a treasure.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Delanna Reed and Dr. Andrew Herrmann of the Department of Communication and Performance at East Tennessee State University as members of my thesis committee. I am gratefully indebted to them for their investment of time and for their very valuable comments on this thesis.

Additional thanks go to Wendy Gourley, and to the good folks at the Timpanogos Storytelling Festival, who granted me access to recordings of Murphy's performances. Thanks, too, to Daniel Foytik at 9th Story Studios, who made recordings of Morden's performances publicly available.

Finally, a special gratitude goes out to the storytellers, Clare Murphy and Daniel Morden, who generously allowed me to use their performances for my study. In addition to being the subject of my study, their brilliant work was also a large part of its inspiration. Thank you, from my heart, for your stories.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| ABSTRACT..... | 2 |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | 3 |
| Chapter | |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 7 |
| Statement of Purpose | 9 |
| Theoretical Framework..... | 10 |
| Methodology | 13 |
| Research Problem and Justification | 13 |
| Data Collection and Analysis..... | 15 |
| Limitations | 18 |
| Organization..... | 19 |
| 2. LITERATURE REVIEW | 22 |
| Discourse Analysis | 22 |
| Frame Analysis | 24 |
| In Narrative | 28 |
| Paying Attention | 32 |
| Frames in Storytelling..... | 33 |
| Realm Status: “Once Upon a Time” | 35 |
| Story Enclaves | 35 |
| Once Upon <i>What</i> Time? Orientation | 37 |
| Relational Attitudes: Evaluation..... | 38 |
| Framing and Meaning | 38 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Structural Evaluative Devices | 39 |
| Emphatic Evaluative Devices | 41 |
| Verbal and Gestural Evaluative Devices | 42 |
| Filling the Gaps | 42 |
| 3. RESULTS PART I: PREFACES | 43 |
| Establishing a Starting Point | 45 |
| Shaping the Realm of Conversation | 46 |
| Shaping the Event Realm | 52 |
| Clearing the Ground | 54 |
| Telling-World Orientation | 59 |
| Summary | 63 |
| 4. RESULTS PART II: EDGEWORK | 65 |
| Openings | 66 |
| Formulaic Openings: Diachronic Repetition | 66 |
| Far, Far Away: Repetition, Rhythm, and Transport | 69 |
| Opening Call-and-Response | 71 |
| Beginnings | 73 |
| Image, Rhythm, and Repetition | 74 |
| Beginning Call-and-Response | 79 |
| Toward the Narrative Present | 81 |
| Orientation Involvement Strategies | 82 |
| Funneling into the Narrative Now | 88 |
| Summary | 90 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 5. RESULTS PART III: INTERNAL FRAME SHIFTS..... | 92 |
| Unintended Frame Breaks..... | 94 |
| Frame Bridges..... | 102 |
| Links to Realms Outside the Enclave | 103 |
| Links to Other Realms Within the Enclave | 112 |
| Conversational Turns | 119 |
| Laughter and other audience responses | 119 |
| Call-and-response and invited participation | 122 |
| Summary | 124 |
| 6. RESULTS PART IV: ENDINGS | 125 |
| Edgework | 126 |
| Repetition..... | 132 |
| Summary..... | 137 |
| 7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION | 138 |
| Summary of Findings..... | 138 |
| Discussion and Interpretation | 141 |
| Further Directions | 143 |
| Conclusion | 144 |
| REFERENCES | 145 |
| APPENDICES | 148 |
| Appendix A: Transcription Conventions | 148 |
| Appendix B: Transcripts, Clare Murphy | 149 |
| Appendix C: Transcripts, Daniel Morden..... | 190 |

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| VITA..... | 234 |
|-----------|-----|

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Far-li-mas, today the day has arrived when you must cheer me. Tell me a story." "The performance is quicker than the command," said Far-li-mas, and began. The king and his guests forgot to drink, forgot to breathe. The slaves forgot to serve. They, too, forgot to breathe. For the art of Far-li-mas was like hashish, and, when he had ended, all were as though enveloped in a delightful swoon. The king had forgotten his thoughts of death. Nor had any realized that they were being held from twilight until dawn; but when the guests departed they found the sun in the sky." –from the Legend of the Destruction of Kash (Campbell, 1969, p. 153)

A storyteller that I once interviewed had spent some time telling stories at a brain and spine center. As she told, she would watch the effects on the patients, noting the physical differences that manifested as the stories lifted the patients' attention out of their immediate conditions. In her experience, she said, transporting listeners "mentally to another place . . . can ease their pain." "You can tell," she added, "by watching the hands"—when a patient begins to relax from pain, their "hands start to unfold" (personal communication, March 24, 2014). Story attention, she noted, has this effect. As a listener's attention shifts into the world of the story, they leave behind the particulars of the present, to the point that even strong sensory input like pain can be ignored.

Story listeners often report experiencing this sense of "transport" during compelling storytelling performances. As listeners focus on the imagery of the story, "the particulars of the moment are left behind, and the group imagination lifts to dwell in the world of the tale" (Sobol, 1999, p. 36). "Transport" is an apt description: in this state, an alternate world, one not actually

present in space and time, engages the listeners' sensory and emotional receptive channels, disrupting their awareness of their physical surroundings and distorting their subjective sense of time (Sturm 2000). "Transported" listeners cease to attend to their physical environment, while inhabiting a world of internally generated imagery that they experience temporarily as "real." Remarkably, this effect is produced with no other machinery than the simple medium of spoken language. Understanding how storytellers do this—how their words invoke worlds, and how their language lifts attention to imaginary realms—is central to understanding the mechanics of the storyteller's art.

Additionally, understanding realm-shift may provide clues to unlocking the long-touted "power of storytelling." Modern literature abounds with claims about the "power of storytelling"—an apparently popular catchphrase—in various fields, from organizational development, leadership, sales and marketing (Denning, 2011), to legal practice (Bobo, 2010), to education (Abrahamson, 1998), and even to medicine (Charon, 2006). Stories, it has been noted, have particular power to persuade, to brand, to organize and define communities, to instill mutual vision, and even to heal. However, despite this interest in story's ability to powerfully influence the mind, there is little research that aims to understand the linguistic underpinnings of its hypnotic and persuasive power.

As a performance storyteller, and as someone who hopes to apply storytelling and the power of realm-shift in the context of therapy, I also have a vested interest in understanding how storytellers facilitate enhanced attention. It was this feeling of transport that first brought me to performance storytelling, and inspired me to study the art. Additionally, because of the contexts in which I have often experienced it, I believe that storytelling transport is uniquely healing. This has led me to an interest in applying it in the marriage and family therapy practice for which I am

currently preparing. I thus approach the topic with the lens, not only of a performer interested in entertaining an audience and keeping their attention, but as a clinician, hoping, by probing this phenomenon, to distill its medicine.

Statement of Purpose

The power of storytelling to produce intense focus on imagined worlds is a striking phenomenon, and yet it has so far been only narrowly explored. In this inquiry, I aim to explore the story-transport experience, examining how storytellers artfully shift attention between story performance “realms” (Young, 1987). Throughout the course of a storytelling performance, attention shifts from the immediate conversation, to the telling of the story as a performance, to the imagined events of the tale itself. I aim to illuminate the strategies that storytellers use to navigate between these realms, facilitating the experience of storytelling transport.

In particular, I aim to explore the ways that this is done in a performance context. My literature review revealed that what research there is on this topic focuses only on conversational narrative, neglecting stage storytelling. This has led to an absence of discussion concerning how stories might be artfully framed, designed to ease or to set off the boundaries between realms and maximize listener transport. Ordinary conversational analysis naturally does not care whether the shifts between realms are graceful or merely functional. But for a performance storyteller, this is an area of particular interest, since successful conveyance of meaning, as well as successful storytelling “transport,” depends on smooth, nuanced, and purposeful navigation of realms. This, then, is the purpose of my inquiry: to explore how performance storytellers use language to facilitate audience transport between the immediate performance space and the imaginal spaces in which stories unfold.

In this exploration, I focus on this central research question: How do performance storytellers navigate realm-shift through language? The following related questions are also treated in the study:

- 1) How do storytellers employ linguistic and paralinguistic devices to facilitate transitions between realms?
- 2) How do storytellers navigate frame disruptions, when attention to a particular realm is broken?
- 3) How does realm-shift contribute to sense-making and meaning?

Theoretical Framework

To explore these questions, I examine how two accomplished contemporary tellers manage audience attention to create the phenomenon of “realm-shift” (Young, 1987), analyzing their performances under the lens of frame and discourse analysis. Frame analysis and discourse analysis pair well for this purpose. Young (1987) explains that narrative realm-shift involves “the discovery of multiple realities” (p. xi), such as the reality of the present performance, and the reality of the world of the tale. These multiple realities are invoked and navigated by use of frames. A frame, in essence, is a meta-communicative message that gives interpretive cues to people engaged in some social interaction (Bateson, 1955). In storytelling, these cues serve to shift audience attention between realms of discourse (Young, 1987). They provide an angle of entry into each successive story realm, from the conversation, to the performance, to the world of the story. In this way, they are a fictive realm’s “points of access,” “the thresholds of a universe” (Young, 1987, p. 11). At the same time, the frames themselves are invoked and navigated by use of language. Within the theoretical framework of frame analysis, then, I also employ “nuts-and-bolts discourse analysis” (Tannen, 2003, p. 11).

Tannen (2007) describes this “nuts-and-bolts discourse analysis” as “a method of tape recording and transcribing naturally occurring interaction which becomes the basis for interpretive microanalytic exegesis of selected samples” (p. 7). Though my samples are somewhat larger, ranging from seven to thirty minutes, I follow the same primary pattern in analyzing recorded discourse line by line, microanalyzing small samples to try to pinpoint the crux of the involvement strategies at work.

I focus particularly on the ways that speakers shape language to invite involvement. According to Tannen (2007) speakers create involvement in language through the twin means of “sound and sense.” “By means of the sound or music of language,” she says, “hearers and readers are rhythmically involved; at the same time, they are involved by participating in the making of meaning” (p. 2). These sound-and-sense strategies include such devices as rhythmic synchrony, figures of speech, and repetition. My method is to analyze how storytellers deploy these involvement strategies in performance, and particularly how they use them to create, to shape, and to navigate realms through narrative framing.

Discourse analysis of the performance samples is done in the context of what Young (1987) named “narrative frame and boundary.” I pair discourse analysis with frame analysis by examining how linguistic involvement strategies are used to artfully direct attention toward framing the realms of the event, the performance, and the story for the audience. In this way, discourse analysis and frame analysis harmonize. Frame analysis, suggests Tannen (2003), “provides a framework for linguistic discourse analysis” (p. 11). The two approaches can be used in tandem, she says, so that “theories of framing can be translated into nuts-and-bolts discourse analysis,” and “analysis of framing” can improve “our understanding of conversational

interaction” (p. 5). This dual framework allows me to move a step beyond how frames and realms are constellated to how the tellers’ language moves attention between them.

In my frame analysis of storytelling performances, I build upon the groundwork set out by Labov and Waletzky (1967) and elaborated by Young (1987, 2004). Though they never used the term “frame,” Labov and Waletzky (1967) provided the background for the study of narrative framing, sketching a basic formal structure for narrative in general. According to their model, the expectation for certain structural elements, such as a section orienting the listener to the world of the story, is built into the narrative event itself as a sort of frame. This structural frame provides the template for interpreting the narrative; without it, the narrative cannot be coherent. Katharine Young (1987) built upon the framework defined by Labov and Waletzky and introduced Goffman’s frame theory into this structural analysis, using these to give a thorough account of “realm-shift” in conversational narrative (pp. 18, 21). She defined a story’s “realms” as the “Realm of Conversation,” the conversation in which the story occurs; the “Storyrealm,” the story itself as a performance in the present; and the “Taleworld,” the narrated event, unfolding in imaginary space and time.¹ She mapped these realms’ basic topography (pp. 19-45), and demonstrated how “frames inherent in the storytelling occasion” direct attention “from one realm to another” (p. 19).² This method of conversational narrative analysis serves as the theoretical basis for my analysis of realm-shift in performance storytelling.

¹ I adopt this terminology throughout.

² This groundwork, briefly summarized here, will be further elaborated in Chapter Two’s literature review.

Methodology

Research Problem and Justification

Examining the research of Young (1987, 2004) and others, I found that the use of narrative frames to create a narrative occasion, manage expectation, and aid sense-making is well elaborated in existing research (Bauman, 1986; Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Young, 1987). What has been less thoroughly explored, however, is precisely how storytellers manage attention between these frames, how they employ linguistic and paralinguistic devices to navigate the transitions between boundaries, and most specifically, how this is done in professional storytelling performance contexts. This is the subject of my inquiry.

The phenomenon of “realm-shift” through framing in conversational narrative has been well elucidated by Young (1987), who built on a framework of earlier researchers such as Goffman (1974), Bateson (1955), and Labov and Waletzky (1967). What has not been so thoroughly explored is how this framing functions in performance, rather than conversational, contexts. While it is similar enough to share the same basic framework, performance storytelling differs from conversational narrative in key ways that make it an ideal venue to observe and analyze realm-shift. First, realm-shift is particularly potent in stage storytelling, where stories can often be significantly longer than in average conversation—several of the included transcripts are twenty minutes or longer. Listeners spend much longer attending to the events of the Taleworld, and the experience is potentially more immersive than in conversational storytelling. Additionally, on stage, tellers manage attention with the intentionality of art, making their involvement strategies more visible. Building on Young’s narrative frame analysis, I delve further into the mechanics of realm-shift, examining how performance storytellers shape language to navigate the boundaries between realms, artfully directing audience attention.

Additionally, Young's treatment of attention does not extend much further than the basic structural function of frames. She observes that frames are designed to direct attention "from one realm to another," but does not discuss how linguistic devices might facilitate that shift of attention. Likewise, just as there is little discussion concerning how realms are gracefully navigated, there is little discussion concerning how they are maintained. Attention is inconstant and must be engaged repeatedly throughout the course of any extended turn at talk (Young, 1987, p. 19). Young (1987) notes that over the course of a telling, "attention shifts, whimsically or deliberately, from one realm to another" (p. 19). In performance storytelling, however, there is a vested interest in ensuring that frame shift is deliberate rather than whimsical, that attention follows where the teller leads through intentional technique. Performance storytelling is an ideal research venue to highlight the management of attention in storytelling, where such techniques are on full display.

A preliminary literature review revealed that in the storytelling world in general, there is little discussion, at least at the level of discourse, about how storytellers manage attention.³ There is some analysis (and plenty of advice) at the level of performance technique and story content.⁴ At its most complex, practitioners conduct their discussions of storytelling transport in

³ Stallings (1988), for instance, notes that throughout the storytelling world, "anthropologists, psychologists, linguists, poets, and folklorists . . . allude to" the power of storytelling to create enhanced attention, "but don't explain it." Instead, she observes, "they rhapsodize about the teller's skill and the special bond between teller and listener; then they change the subject" (p. 2). Thus while "anthropologists, folklorists, poets, and other writers eloquently describe the storylistening trance," "little . . . has been written about what causes or controls this distilled essence of story magic" (p. 7). She further notes that "no researchers seem to be studying" the phenomenon "in a natural (audience) setting" (p. 3).

⁴ See, *e.g.*, Lipman (1999), Davis (2005), Simms (2011), and Ellis (2012) for a representative sample.

terms of story content, performance techniques, and elements of craft. But beyond such considerations, little is offered about the forces that operate on the listeners' attention during a performance. This is partly because storytelling lacks a vibrant system of criticism. Painting and literature and music all have critical vocabularies and theoretical systems aimed at breaking down the mechanisms by which their works affect audiences. Storytelling, as an art with a limited critical apparatus, does not. Developing systematic critical theories and vocabularies is beyond the scope of this paper. However, I hope that analyzing how performance storytelling functions structurally, both on the event level and on the discourse level, contributes to a framework for the critical analysis of storytelling as an art form.

Even among storytellers themselves, there is some reticence about analyzing how storytelling transport functions. Accounts of storytelling's capacity for inducing altered states generally devolve into descriptions that are vague, effusive, and mystical (Stallings, 1988, pp. 2, 7). The default term is "magic." It is no wonder, of course, if such power as storytelling possesses seems almost mystical; nor are storytellers to be blamed for taking off their shoes when they approach its inner mysteries. With the intention of treading carefully enough to respect the sacredness of this ground, yet directly enough to see the subject clearly, I hope to explicate, at least in part, its actual mechanism.

Data Collection and Analysis

To conduct this exploration, I analyze a sample of festival storytelling performances from oral-traditional tellers. Although this study does not focus on genre and story content, I intentionally selected performances from tellers of myth, fairytales, and folktales. Because such stories often feature fantastical elements and supernatural motifs, they are further removed from

the external world, and exhibit starker realm boundaries and the need for additional orientation.⁵ In essence, fantastical genres often require additional narrative framing, and so are an ideal venue to observe it. Thus, although genre and content will not directly factor into this study, tellers that exhibit these styles present ideal study samples. Rather than examining the effect of the content itself, the study focuses on how storytellers employ language to frame that content and to invite enhanced attention to it.

With these categories in mind, I selected performances by two tellers, Clare Murphy and Daniel Morden. Both storytellers favor fantastical genres such as folk and fairy tales. Murphy, an Irish teller, tells myth, folk, and fairytales from Ireland and from around the world. Morden specializes in the myth, legends, and fairytales of his native Wales, as well as other European mythological and folk traditions. Both tellers are experienced, well-known, and highly skilled artists. They have performed at the nation's two largest festivals, and both rank among audience favorites, drawing significant crowds.

Their performance samples, recorded and transcribed with their permission, took place in festival settings. Selecting these professional platform performance venues ensured that the tellers would have demonstrated exceptional ability, not only in storytelling style and form, but particularly in engaging audiences. Morden's performances took place at the 2014 National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, and Murphy's took place at the 2014 Timpanogos Storytelling Festival in Provo, Utah. I obtained Murphy's recordings from festival organizers, and accessed Morden's recordings through publicly available online sources.

I reviewed three festival sets from each teller, totaling about 2.5 hours of material. I transcribed these performances verbatim, using the socio-linguistic transcription conventions of

⁵ See, *e.g.*, Stallings (1988) for a discussion of possible effects of story genre and fantastical content on listener attention (pp. 8-9).

Chafe (1980, 1994) and Tannen (2007). According to Chafe, segments of speech are processed by speakers and listeners as “idea units” or “intonation units.” Since at any moment, only “a small amount of information” can be “active in the mind of the speaker,” each unit is a snapshot of “the speaker’s focus of consciousness at that moment” (1994, p. 63). These intonation units are recognizably set off by audible pauses, as well as by changes in intonation or pitch (1980, p. 14). Each segment represents the small bit of information that is currently active in the speaker’s mind and, ideally, the listener’s mind. In the transcription, these units are set off by paragraph breaks and numbered. As Tannen (2007) explains, breaking transcript lines into intonation units “capture(s) in print the natural chunking achieved in speaking by a combination of intonation, prosody, pausing, and verbal particles such as discourse and hesitation markers” (p. 193). Additionally, punctuation attempts to preserve the speaker’s rhythm and intonation, rather than grammatical conventions (Tannen, 2007, p. 193). A full table of transcription conventions can be found in Appendix A, and full transcripts of the performances can be found in Appendices B and C.

I coded the transcripts for emergent categories and patterns, focusing on narrative frames used by tellers, places where realm-shift occurs, and linguistic involvement strategies used to ease transitions between realms. These initial codes were descriptive, focusing both on the level of framing and on the level of discourse. Framing codes included such structural markers as “preface,” “opening,” “orientation,” “evaluation,” and “ending.” This category also included frame departures such as “audience turns,” “frame breaks,” and “transposition.” Discourse codes focused largely on involvement strategies such as “repetition,” “poetic rhythm,” “alliteration,” and “image.” This category also included notes on grammatical patterns such as “verb tense,” “linking conjunctions,” and “noun and pronoun use.” Following this, I compared these two sets

of codes in order to write a series of memos applying frame and discourse analysis to each individual story, noting how discourse strategies were deployed around frame shifts. Finally, I coded these memos for overarching patterns in order to group the data by results, rather than by story set. These coded memos form the basis of my results.

My analysis traces the process of realm-shift throughout a storytelling performance, from beginning to end. I look at how storytellers “frame” stories (Young, 1987), story performances, and storytelling events to invite, direct, and maintain their audience’s attention to imaginal realms. I examine how linguistic factors such as involvement strategies (Tannen, 2007) and shifting verb tenses (Polanyi, 1989) are used to guide attention and to navigate between the listener’s immediate surroundings and the imagined realm of the story, creating smooth entries and exits into and out of what Young (1987) calls the Taleworld, and facilitating audience experiences of storytelling transport.

Analysis in the following chapters is both formal and functional. Formally, I build on the structural scaffolding of frame-theory set out by Labov and Waletzky (1967) and elaborated by Young (1987, 2004). Functionally, I apply sociolinguistic discourse analysis to the samples, with particular reference to Tannen’s (2007) concept of involvement strategies, in order to explore the sociolinguistic mechanisms that tellers deploy to frame the listening experience.

Limitations

The chief limitations of this study are those necessarily imposed on its scope, since I worked with samples from only two tellers in specific and restricted settings. Storytelling festivals present a distinct set of audiences, expectations, environments, and performance requirements. These inevitably affect the expectations, perceptions, and attitudes that festival tellers have to contend with, and thus the involvement strategies that they utilize. Additionally,

since all the analyzed samples came from American storytelling festivals, the study is also limited in cultural application. Whether the same frames and involvement strategies are used by tellers in non-Western traditions would make for a very interesting study, but is beyond the scope of this paper.

Additionally, it is beyond the scope of this study to attempt to demonstrate the effectiveness of involvement strategies, or the correlation between teller strategies and audience attention. The study does not evaluate which strategies are more or less effective; rather, it looks only at which strategies are deployed at particular moments in the performance arc. Because these tellers are working in the context of highly selective public performance events, it can be assumed to some extent that the strategies they deploy are likely to be effective. However, to demonstrate degrees of effectiveness it would be necessary to develop and deploy sophisticated methods of recording and analyzing audience responses. These lie beyond the scope of this project.

Essentially, with this study I hope only to illuminate part of the mechanism of realm-shift as illustrated by some of those who best practice it, and to find patterns in the meta-communicative devices that tend to aid this transport. Larger considerations of the implications of genre, culture, language background, etc. upon narrative frame and the linguistic devices used to navigate it will not be treated in this study, though they make for interesting potential future directions.

Organization

This Introduction provides the justification for conducting a frame and discourse analysis of stage storytelling performances. It explains my reasons for exploring the phenomenon of realm-shift, and introduces my research question and related questions, explaining how the study

fills a research gap in the context of performance storytelling. It also offers a basic theoretical framework of discourse analysis and frame analysis and discusses how I applied these methods to the performance samples, detailing both my method of data collection and my method of analysis. Lastly, it discusses limitations on this study's scope.

Chapter Two offers a review of the literature on frame analysis of oral narrative, tracing the concept of a "frame" and how it has been applied to give a basic map of narrative structure. It also gives a brief review of relevant discourse analysis literature, focusing on Tannen's (2007) concept of "involvement strategies." Following the literature review, I present my analysis of the performance samples in four results sections:

- Chapter Three examines the initial stages of a performance, and how tellers frame story "prefaces." It explores how storytellers manage audience attention by 1) providing a background conversation to which the story can meaningfully connect, 2) clearing the ground of distractions, and 3) funneling their attention toward the Telling-world and orienting them to its unique facets.
- Chapter Four examines a story's beginning, tracing how storytellers direct attention from the Realm of Conversation, established in the preface, to the Telling-world and to the Taleworld. It explores how tellers use frames to create an angle of entry into each new realm, and how they smooth the boundaries between these realms by artfully employing involvement strategies around moments of transition.
- Chapter Five discusses frame disruptions or "breaks," moments that move focus away from the imaginal space of the Taleworld. It explores how tellers recover from these breaks, when they are unintentional. It also explores how tellers artfully employ such

breaks in order to link the story to other realms, increasing the story's relevance and "tellability."

- Chapter Six explores story endings, and the final stages of a performance. It examines how storytellers deploy involvement strategies to release the audience's attention from the Taleworld spell and to re-introduce them to the immediate conversation. It also examines how tellers frame endings to create a sense of consequentiality, with express focus on the role of repetition.

Finally, Chapter Seven discusses these results and their implications for the art of storytelling, touching on its applied fields.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study will fuse discourse analysis and frame analysis to explore how storytellers use language to frame the story-listening experience for their audiences. This chapter will offer a theoretical background to these concepts and their usage. In particular, it will focus on Tannen's (2007) concept of "involvement strategies," and will explore the concept of a "frame" and its deployment in "frame analysis." It will outline the history of the concept of "framing" in general, and its treatment by researchers such as Bateson (1955) and Goffman (1971). Finally, it will trace development of framing as a method of analyzing oral narrative, from its application in the study of discourse (Goffman, 1984; Gumperz, 1982) to Young's (1987) development of the concept as part of a phenomenology of narrative.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis, as Tannen notes, is a subdiscipline of linguistics that is "almost dismayingly diverse" (2007, p.5). As its object of study is simply "language beyond the sentence" (p. 5), it can refer to a frustratingly broad range of research. Here, I rely primarily on the methods of Tannen (2007), and particularly on her concept of "involvement strategies."

Involvement strategies, according to Tannen (2007), are "a systematic way of using language" in order to create listener involvement. She defines involvement as "an internal, even emotional connection individuals feel which binds them to other people as well as to places, things, activities, ideas, memories, and words" (p. 27). She notes that this is "not a given but an achievement;" coordinated interaction is not the same thing as "mere co-presence." Nor is it a mere bonus—"conversational involvement . . . is the basis of all linguistic understanding" (p. 25, citing Gumperz). Thus in any form of discourse, it may be expected that savvy speakers will employ language strategically towards this goal. And because involvement is central,

involvement strategies are “the basic force in both conversational and literary discourse” (2007, p. 30, 31). Significantly, this notion of involvement turns listening into an active engagement, rather than a passive reception (p. 27), so that it can be said that in an effective storytelling performance, the audience members are not receptacles for a performance, but active participants in the shaping of a dialogue.

Tannen explores the two ways that speakers create involvement through language: sound, or rhythmic involvement, and sense, or meaning-making (2007, p. 2). These sound-and-sense strategies include such devices as rhythmic synchrony, imagery, constructed dialogue, and repetition. Repetition receives particular focus, and how “syntactic repetition functions in conversation in production, comprehension, connection, and interaction” (p. 3). Tannen’s treatment of repetition is particularly significant for the purposes of this analysis.

Tannen (2007) distinguishes between different classes of repetition. First, she distinguishes between self-repetition and allo-repetition, which is repetition of others (p. 63). She further distinguishes between what she calls “synchronic” and “diachronic” repetition. Synchronic repetition is “repeating one’s own or another’s words within a discourse” (p. 102). Diachronic repetition, on the other hand, is “repeating words from a discourse distant in time” (p. 102). In addition, she notes that “instances of repetition may be placed along a scale of fixity in form, ranging from exact repetition . . . to paraphrase” (p. 63). Thus an instance of repetition need not be exact to function as an involvement strategy. Furthermore, an instance of repetition need not repeat content at all—it might instead be what Tannen calls “patterned rhythm,” a repetition of “syntactic” or “rhythmic paradigm” (p. 63). This analysis will examine all of these varieties of repetition in storytelling discourse.

Frame Analysis

The concept of a frame, as I will be using it here, was introduced by Gregory Bateson (1955) in “A Theory of Play and Fantasy.” Watching monkeys play, he noticed evidence of what he called “meta-communication”—nonverbal communication in which “the subject of the discourse is the relationship between speakers” (p. 179). Although the monkeys were enacting the same behaviors that would mark aggression, it was evident that the participants understood the activity to be play. This could not take place, he reasoned, without some sort of meta-message passing between them, framing the interaction as play rather than aggression. He expanded his study of the phenomenon to demonstrate that no instance of communication can be understood without some sort of meta-communicative frame through which the interaction can be interpreted (as cited in Tannen, 1993, p. 3).

Researchers in anthropology, communication, and psychology took up the concept. In *Frame Analysis* (1974), Goffman attempted to create a sociological framework for the cognitive organization of experience. Teasing out the relations between social life and meaning, he analyzed “the numerous levels and types of framing that constitute everyday interaction” (Tannen, 1993, p. 3). Harking back to Bateson (1955), he introduced the concept of “keying.” A “key” is “the set of conventions by which a given activity, one already meaningful in terms of some primary framework, is transformed into something patterned on this activity but seen by the participants to be something quite else” (pp. 43-44). In essence, “keying” is understanding a frame or a framework in terms of another, as when monkeys understand a framework of “playing” through reference to a framework of “fighting.” This concept is especially relevant to storytelling, where invocation of a Taleworld might be considered a “keying,” through fantasy or retrospection, of real-world events.

In “Forms of Talk” (1981) Goffman extended the concept further into language and discourse, analyzing “ritualized” gestural conventions, “embedded” quotation and reported speech, and the concept of a “participation framework.” Goffman notes that when any utterance is made, “all those who happen to be in perceptual range of the event will have some sort of participation status relative to it.” A robust interaction analysis requires “the codification of these various positions” and an investigation into “the normative specification of appropriate conduct within each” (p. 3). Goffman identifies the roles that participants adopt during an interaction, the “alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance” (p. 128), as “footing.” He specifically notes that analysis of such interactions is the province of linguistics, observing that “linguistics provides us with the cues and markers through which such footings become manifest, helping us to find our way to a structural basis for analyzing them” (p. 157). With this analysis, Goffman brought framing into the realm of linguistics.

Continuing to develop the concept of framing as it relates to conversation and discourse, Gumperz (1982) developed a theory of conversational inference. According to Gumperz, conversational involvement requires the giving and reading of certain contextualization cues “that signal the speech activity in which participants perceive themselves to be engaged” (Tannen, 1993, p. 4). Tannen (1993) explains that while Gumperz did not use the term “frame,” “his notion of speech activity is thus a type of frame” (p. 4). Studying contextualization cues in the context of speech acts, Gumperz’ work, according to Tannen, provides “justification for Goffman’s belief in the ability of linguistics to elucidate the structural basis for framing” (p. 4). Tannen herself picked up this tradition, researching framing in the context of discourse.

Tannen and Wallat (1993) note that historically, two senses of “frame” emerged; she separates these two into “knowledge schemas” and “interactive frames.” Knowledge schemas are “structures of expectation” associated with situations, objects, people, and so on (p. 6). Interactive frames (frames in Bateson’s and Goffman’s sense) are more concerned with “what people think they are doing when they talk to each other (i.e., are they joking, lecturing, or arguing? Is this a fight or is it play?)” (p. 6). She further explains that a frame, in the sociological view, is “an interactional unit with social meaning,” a “relational concept” concerned with “the dynamic relationship between people” (p. 19). For the purposes of this analysis, all of these senses of “framing” are significant, as the study concerns both the structures of expectation governing a performance event and the social frames that govern the relationship between teller and listener.

In essence, a frame, in a general sociological sense, is a meta-communicative message that gives interpretive cues to people engaged in some social interaction. These cues might define the type of interaction—storytelling and story-listening, for instance—or they might define the expectations associated with the situation, the way that the phrase “Once upon a time” triggers expectations of fairy-tale conventions.

Tannen’s definition of frames seems to center primarily around structures of interpretation or expectation; in this sense, she uses “frame” primarily as a noun. Young’s (1987) understanding of “frame,” on the other hand, seems to be in some ways more verb than noun. Frames “cue;” they “direct” attention. A teller “frames” a realm. While Tannen’s understanding of frames as interpretive frameworks and sets of expectations is relevant to this analysis, Young’s analytical toolkit is primary. The two are not exclusive, however; it is through pre-existing sets of social and cultural expectations that a speaker is able to frame realms for his

audience. The meta-communicative cues—“framing” as a verb—only function because the audience is hard-wired with the decode key—“frames” as a noun.

Tannen (1993) also differentiates between “macro and micro levels of framing” (p. 11), frames that operate on the “event level,” and frames that operate on the “discourse level.” Here, both levels of frame are relevant. Frames on the event level bracket events and “realms” (Young, 1987), creating an enclave for the event and setting up expectations for what will happen within it. Event-level frames include the framing of a storytelling event, such as a festival, on the whole, as well as bracketing individual performances and stories. They also include “the negotiation of relationships among participants” (p. 12), and are thus related to Young’s (2007) second category of frames, which suggest or reveal “the relationship between its tellers and hearers” (p. 20). Discourse-level frames, on the other hand, operate on a more local level, and consist of “particular conversational moves” (p. 12). Young only partly addresses frames on this level; this will be a gap I hope to fill.

Suggesting an interplay between these levels of framing, Bauman (1986) provides a basis for “an integrated framework that comprehends narrated event and narrative event within a unified frame of reference.” “Focusing jointly on narration and interpretation,” he breaks the basic framing of oral narrative performance into text (story), narrated event (event), and narrative event (performance), and claims that these three share an “indissoluble unity,” such that the elements cannot be understood separately from each other. In this model, the narrated event is not static, objective history, but emerges as part of the performance, taking its shape from the interpretation of those present in the interaction. Thus the function of event-level frames—Bauman’s “narrative events”—cannot be divorced from the working of discourse-level frames, which belong to the “text.” His “event-level frames” are also roughly equivalent to Young’s

“Realm of Conversation,” or in stage storytelling, what we might call the “Event Realm.” He highlights the importance of this realm, noting that “oral performance, like all human activity, is situated, its form, meaning, and functions rooted in culturally defined scenes or events—bounded segments of the flow of behavior and experience that constitute meaningful contexts for action, interpretation, and evaluation” (p. 3). His framework thus suggests that it is impossible to arrive at meaning and interpretation by looking at the text alone, but only by regarding the text (roughly the Taleworld), the narrative event (performance, or roughly the Telling-world) and the event together. This is particularly true in stage storytelling, where the event frame is foregrounded and is specially designed to facilitate the “narrative event.” It will thus be a significant consideration in my study of platform storytelling frames.

In Narrative

The study of frame in narrative begins with Labov and Waletzky (1967), who set out to define “the basic units of narrative,” and with these to sketch a formal narrative structure. They define the basic framework of a narrative in terms of temporal sequence and “temporal juncture”—essentially, “clauses [that are] temporally ordered with respect to each other” (p. 25). The overall structure they define in terms of essential elements: the orientation, the complicating action section or main body, the evaluation, the resolution, and the coda. They thus define narrative framing (though they don’t use the term) primarily in terms of structure: the expectation for certain structural beats is built into the narrative event itself as a sort of frame. Without one of these structural bearings, the interpretive frame falls apart and the narrative becomes unintelligible.

Katherine Young (1987) built on the framework defined by Labov and Waletzky and introduced the terms “frame” and “boundary” to this structural analysis. Harking back to

Bateson, she explains that frames are “meta-communication.” In narrative, they serve to navigate between different “realms of events,” namely the realm of the conversation which gives rise to the story, and the two “ontological presentations of stories.” These she calls the “Taleworld”—the realm of events of the story itself—and the “Storyrealm” or Telling-world⁶—the story as a performance event, transpiring in the present (p. 76). She adopts the Labov-Waletzky elements of orientation and evaluation, and to them adds several frames that she claims also constitute “boundaries”: beginnings and endings, openings and closings, and prefaces and codas.⁷

These boundary frames mark the edges of domains of focus that Young (1987) names “realms.” The movement of attention between them she calls “realm-shift” (p. 18). A “realm” is an “ontological presentation,” defined by “the metaphysical constants which inform its particular background expectancies” (p. 9). It is whatever momentary reality engages a participant, invoked by their active attention. Though there are dramatic examples like hypnosis or trance, movement of attention between “realms” is an everyday, even constant experience. Reality is not experienced all at a single pitch, rather, people attend to manifold realities over the course of a day, each with its own constants and rules. To enter a conversation is to enter into an enclave within everyday reality, a bounded realm with its own background expectations. The reality of the conversation exists only so long as the conversationalists continue. Within the conversation, certain social rules provide the background expectation that define the realm, coding it among other events as “conversation,” rather than, for instance, “confrontation,” or “negotiation.” In the

⁶ While Young (1987) calls this the “Storyrealm,” I will instead call this realm the “Telling-world” hereafter, in order to distinguish it more clearly from the similarly-named “Taleworld.”

⁷ Young also borrows the concept of a “coda” from Labov & Waletzky, though she somewhat modifies its function by separating codas from “closings” (Young, 1987, pp. 35, 43; Labov & Waletzky, 1967, p. 40).

same way, to see an advertisement, to read a book, to see a play, to attend a business meeting, is to enter the realm of that event, to interact with it (or elect not to) as the rules and structures of that event dictate. A realm, then, is an attended reality, bounded by the moments when attention is accorded and withdrawn, and defined by the background expectations that code it among other realms. To enter a realm is to attend to it and to agree to operate by its background expectancies.

There are multiple such realms at play in a storytelling event. Listeners shift progressively⁸ through: 1) the realm of the larger storytelling event, 2) the realm of conversation, or of the individual performance block, 3) the realm of the story as a performance event, and finally 4) the realm of the story events themselves. Listeners begin in the event realm.⁹ This realm concerns the structure of the overall performance event—whether it is a festival, a story slam, an evening solo performance—as well as such factors as the venue and its capacity, the number of attendees, the advertising for the event, and other considerations related to how the performance is situated temporally, physically, and socially. This event realm is designed to facilitate and to move attention inward toward the realm of the individual performance or

⁸ I do not mean to suggest that realm-shift is purely one-directional. Audiences may be simultaneously aware of multiple realms, as when a teller makes a joke during a story that alludes to real-world events. The overall structure of storytelling realm-shift, though, follows this basic progression.

⁹ While Young's "Realm of Conversation" and Bauman's "Realm of the Event" are at times roughly equivalent, I have found it useful to differentiate them. There are, at least in some ways, two levels of "event" or "conversation" at play at a storytelling festival. Both refer to the wider world outside the story, but in different ways. In this model, the outermost frame is the wider event—the entire festival. This is the backdrop against which every individual performance block occurs. Within this realm, each performance block constitutes its own "realm of conversation." This distinction will allow me to explore both the ways that storytellers shape the individual performances and conversations in which their stories take place, and the ways that they contribute to the framing of the overall event.

conversation, in which the storyteller prefaces their story for the audience, providing necessary background. This leads into the Telling-world, which involves the awareness of the storyteller as a performer and of the event as a story. It is defined by the expectations of both performer and audience that govern a narrative performance setting, most notably, the expectation that the performer will take an extended turn at talk (Young, 1987, p. 38). This realm is designed to minimize attention to itself, and to draw attention toward the nexus of these realms, the Taleworld (Young, 1987, p. 17). Thus “stories, themselves events in conversation, direct attention to another realm of events not in the conversation, the Taleworld” (Young, 1987, p. 15). The Taleworld comprises the events of the story itself. It takes place in imaginary space and time, populated by characters who are “unaware of their realm as a tale,” who are “geared into the Taleworld as into a reality which demands their responses and responds to their demands” (Young, 1987, pp. 15-16). To engage the listener in the characters and events of this world is the purpose of the Telling-world.

The shift through these “realms” of focus is the essence of story-listening “transport.” Over the course of a storytelling event, attention shifts from the wider event, to the individual conversation and performance, to the events of a Taleworld, transpiring in imaginary space and time (p. 15-18). “The design of storytelling is to set up a Telling-world and then to move through that realm into the Taleworld.” (Young, 1987, p. 17). If this shift is successful, the listener becomes inattentive to their physical environs and their presence in the Event Realm (*id.* p. 17) and begins instead to attend to characters and events that are not physically or temporally present. They have been “transported” to the Taleworld.

Paying Attention

This “realm shift” is not an accident of storytelling, nor indeed of any social interaction. It is an intentional transfer of focus, cued by social and linguistic prompts. Because a realm is attended reality, the currency of “realm shift” is attention. As Young (1987) observes, “I enter a realm by turning my attention to it, as when, listening to a story, I am caught up in the relationships among characters in the Taleworld” (p. ix). Further, “these realms are sustained only by my attention” (p. 18). The question becomes, then, how a participant in an interaction decides where to devote his attention, and how attention is governed in such a way as to enable coherent perception and intelligible social interactions.

The question is not trivial. In fact, it lies at the center of the phenomenon of perception. In a very real sense, the reality (“realm”) that an observer inhabits depends upon the active engagement of his attention; without cues to govern this attention, an observer is incapable of perceiving anything at all. The relationship between attention and perception is well illustrated by a famous problem of artificial intelligence, the “frame problem.” The problem, as Peterson and Flanders (2002) note, is that despite the naïve hopes of early roboticists for “all-purpose” robots capable of perceiving and acting in a dynamic environment, “AI researchers have consistently failed in their attempts to create a machine that could function . . . in dynamic, real-world conditions” (p. 422). The difficulty comes from the unexpected complexity of perception. Specifically, it emerges from the problem of the complexity of the cues governing attention—“the unexpected difficulty of specifying what should be ignored, and what attended to, with regards to a particular action” (p. 422). This is because, in any given interaction, the possibilities for perception, interpretation, and action are endless. “There are an infinite number of ways to perceive or construe a given situation, and an infinite number of potential consequences of a

given action or event” (p. 432). Jordan concludes that “even apparently simple events are not bounded in any simple way” (p. 433, citing Dennett, 1984). Rather, “events are simple and distinct only insofar as their relevant features are framed, *a priori*, by the constraints of an operative context” (p. 433). In essence, perception itself depends upon framing.

In this understanding of perception, objects and events are not passively perceived; they are created and given definition by the participant’s active attention. Essentially, the reality an observer inhabits depends upon what she ignores, and what she attends. It follows that realm-shift—moving between realities—comes down to the management of attention. It comes down to successfully employing cues concerning “what should be ignored, and what attended to,” and cues specifying what the “operative context” is, which signals to the participant the range of proper responses in relating to each perceived realm. These cues are known throughout several disciplines, from artificial intelligence to sociolinguistics, as “frames.”

Frames in Storytelling

A “frame” is an angle of entry into a realm. It is a meta-communicative message that serves to direct attention, and to set background expectations. In storytelling, this means that a frame provides an angle of entry from the realm of conversation into the telling-world, or from this realm into the Taleworld. As Young (2004) notes, some frames provide an angle of entry into the events of a realm by “bounding” them (p. 79). Such frames mark the limits of events, such as the beginning and end of a story, which bound the Taleworld. This is roughly analogous to, for instance, the edges of a painting, which bound its contents, or the moment when discussion participants part company, which bounds a conversation. Other frames provide an angle of entry into a realm in other ways, by orienting participants to the realm’s constants, or by providing interpretive evaluation.

In storytelling, frames are of two basic kinds (Young, 2004, pp. 76-77):

1. Frames that codify. Such frames both “codify stories among other kinds of events,” and “codify kinds of stories” (Young, 2004, p. 76). Frames that codify set the status of a realm by directing the audience’s attention to it and by giving them information about its background constants. As the frames that set realm status, lying along the edges of realms and bounding their events, frames that codify are also the frames that are “boundaries.”
2. Frames that suggest relational attitudes. Frames can be meta-communication suggesting relationships between communicators. They can also invite or reveal attitudes toward the events of a realm. Young notes that this type of frame is “akin to Labov and Waletzky’s evaluative devices,” which cue listeners to the meaning and purpose of the narrative by disclosing the attitude of the narrator toward the narrative events (p. 77).

Both kinds of frames involve the management of attention. Codifying frames direct attention to a specific realm in order to create a space for it. In addition, they draw attention to the background expectancies of a realm, to the way participants and performers are expected to relate. While such frames draw attention to boundary shifts and to realm definitions, relational and evaluative frames instead direct attention to events within the realms themselves. By directing attention to some elements disproportionately to others, they signal the importance of certain elements, thus enabling interpretation and sense-making. Since these are the frames that impart meaning, it could be said that the codifying frames exist to create a space for the relational ones. The relational and evaluative attitudes are the foreground and are the primary reason for the interaction; the codifying cues simply provide the structure that allows for interpretive action. Codifying frames create a space; relational frames fill the space and fulfill the purpose of the space.

All together, these frames have two meta-communicative functions in narrative: to “set the realm status of an event” and to “set an attitude toward the events in that realm” (Young, 2004, p. 76-77). In their function of defining realm status, frames create an “enclave” in the conversation so that a story can take place, and “direct attention from one realm to another” (p. 76). They funnel attention from the here-and-now realm of conversation into the Taleworld, and back to the realm of conversation at the end. In their function of setting an attitude, frames give weight and shape to the events of the Taleworld and Telling-world, giving them coherence and meaning.

Realm Status: “Once Upon a Time”

Story Enclaves

Frames manage audience expectations and set participation parameters by signaling the type of interaction or discourse that is occurring. In storytelling, the frames that accomplish this function are mainly the frames that Young marks as “frames that are also boundaries”—essentially, the structural frames that mark the beginning (and opening and preface) and ending (and closing and coda) of a story.

As it does in any interaction, framing in storytelling serves to address and manage the expectations of the participants, and to suggest an appropriate participation framework. First, to initiate, the speaker needs to signal to the listener that he intends to shift into another form of discourse. Polanyi (1989) explains that at least “in an American conversation, story recipients are alerted by conventional story introducers which a would-be storyteller uses to signal the intention to tell a story” (p. 15). Marking this boundary between the larger conversation and the story are prefaces and codas, which “create an enclosure” that separates the Telling-world and Taleworld from the Realm of Conversation (Young, 2004, p. 85). The preface “ensures that there

will be a space provided for the story,” and the coda provides a bridge from that space back to the originating conversation (p. 86). This space must be set apart from ordinary conversation in this way, because the Telling-world presents a departure from the conventions of ordinary conversation. A storyteller suspends the usual trade of brief utterance turns to take an extended turn at talk; to do so, she needs a “ticket” (p. 87).

In addition to signaling the intention to hold the floor, a teller also needs to cue the listeners that the extended speech will be narrative. This initiation is necessary, as Young (2004) observes, because narratives are “a different order of discourse from the conversation that encloses them;” they are set off in what she calls “story enclaves” (p. 83). These story enclaves are set off by the frames that she names “openings and closings,” which mediate the boundary between the Telling-world and the realm of conversation (p. 83). Sometimes, these openings set additional expectations by adhering to a certain familiar formula, such as “Once upon a time.” Such an opening not only creates a story enclave, but also sets the expectation that the Taleworld will be fairytale-like (p. 84). “The talk then moves out of the here and now of the conversation into a storyworld: another time, often another location, populated by other participants” (Polanyi, 1989, p. 15). Successful storytelling depends upon this expectation, because it needs to be understood that a different set of rules will obtain here than in ordinary conversation. The framing of the event as a Telling-world signals that certain conventions that would otherwise be taken as strange are here acceptable; for instance, “no one is surprised if the narrator speaks from a perspective not his own” (p. 15). The audience is prepared to read these signals because they are familiar with these conventions “from innumerable other story-tellings” (p. 15). They know the background constants of a narrative event, and so a teller has only to invoke the already existing schema.

Once Upon *What* Time? Orientation

In addition to defining the background constants of the Telling-world by establishing the discourse as a narrative event, frames also define the background constants of the Taleworld. An astute teller notes the respects in which the constants and knowns of a Taleworld differ from the known world of the listener and orients the listener to these differences. According to Chafe (1980), in any given situation, there is “information the peripheral consciousness requires in order not to be uncomfortable and disoriented” (p. 41). For instance, it needs information regarding “location in space and time,” “social context,” “salient characteristics of people who make up that context, and ongoing activity in which such people may be engaged” (p. 41). This same information is the foundation that the participant needs in order to feel grounded in a narrative realm, as surely as in a physical one—like anyone waking up in an unfamiliar world, the listener needs to know, straightaway, where they are and, figuratively, what time it is. Hence, says Chafe, we offer openings such as “Once upon a time, in a kingdom far away” (p. 41). He further notes that once the listener has been oriented to time and place, the story generally adds people: “There was a king and his three sons.” In addition, a listener feels more solidly oriented if he can keep in peripheral consciousness some knowledge of the background activity that preceded the story. For this reason, a story often begins with the protagonist initially involved in some sort of “background activity” not critical to the story’s events (p. 41). In this way Chafe describes, in terms of the needs of the listener’s consciousness, the pattern that Labov and Waletzky (1967) call “orientation.”

Orientation has been defined by different researchers in terms of both form and function. Labov and Waletzky (1967) define it primarily structurally, as the group of free clauses (temporally unbounded clauses) that precede the first narrative clause (the first discrete event in

the story world) (p. 32). Polanyi (1989) gives a similar structural analysis, stating that “conventions of narration . . . call for universally true propositions to occur early in a telling, followed by more restricted state propositions, followed by a section of event clauses and states restricted to intervals of time in the narrative world” (p. 19). She calls these early state propositions “durative-descriptive propositions”—propositions that explain characters, settings, motivations, habitual or iterative action, or other such elements (p. 20). Schiffrin (1981), on the other hand, defines this frame primarily by verb tense, explaining that “orientation clauses usually report existing states and extended processes” (p. 49); according to her, orientation is marked by verbs with a progressive/repeated aspect. Young (2004) adopts a view that is more functional than formal, naming as orientation anything that accomplishes the purpose of disclosing the Taleworld “as a realm of events not given to hearers in the way events in everyday life are given,” and thus aiding comprehension by “making some expectancies explicit” (p. 93). Essentially, the orientation provides information on “person, place, time, and behavioral situation” that will be necessary to understand story events and know how to interpret them (Labov, 1967, p. 32). Thus orientation serves to frame the reality of the Taleworld for the listener, minimizing disorientation and enabling the listener to interact with and interpret events within the Taleworld.

Relational Attitudes: Evaluation

Framing and Meaning

The work of framing a coherent narrative involves more than drawing a listener’s attention into a Taleworld and orienting them to it. Labov (2006) insists, “A narrative is about something” (p. 38). Labov and Waletzky (1967) explain that “narrative does not just construct narrative units that match a temporal sequence of an experience. It serves an additional function

of personal interest determined by a stimulus in the social context in which the narrative occurs” (p. 32). They further explain that narrative may lay out events in perfect sequence, and yet be difficult to understand. “Such a narrative lacks significance: it has no point” (p. 33). The point of a narrative, observes Polanyi (1989), emerges from a story’s relevance to the shared world of the teller and listener, or in other words, to the connection between the Taleworld and the Realm of Conversation. This connection is what lends significance and separates story from mere sequential narration. Any sequence of events might make up a narration, she says, but in a story, “a teller describes events which took place in one specific past time world in order to make some sort of point about the world which teller and story recipients share” (p. 16). Bauman (1986) observes further that because oral performance is necessarily “situated, its form, meaning, and functions rooted in culturally defined scenes or events,” a telling cannot be understood as a decontextualized “text,” but only as an event within the context that allows it to be meaningfully interpreted. Divorced from the Taleworld-Realm of Conversation connection, it loses its meaning.

Therefore, the story’s meaning is accomplished by its framing; it is the relation of the Taleworld to the Realm of Conversation—how the events of the story pertain to the here-and-now world—that lends the story its significance. This thematic linkage between the Taleworld and the conversation that provides its context is accomplished by frames that “suggest relational attitudes (Young, 2004, p. 77)—“evaluative devices,” as Labov and Waletzky call them, or as Young calls them more generally, “evaluation.”

Structural Evaluative Devices

Interpretation of meaning is deeply entwined with story structure. According to Labov (2006), the end of the story, generally encapsulating what he calls “the most reportable event,” is

really the kernel of the story, the clue to its *raison d'être*. This event is not, itself, the point of the story; as Young (2004) explains, points are not endings but “recognitions of the relation of ends to beginnings as cogent” (p. 95). While the beginning and ending serve to codify realm status and to frame the Taleworld, the relationship *between* them also serves as an evaluative device. It is the relationship between the beginning and the end, the way that it is mediated and framed, that cues the audience to the point of the story. Tannen (1993) explains that in any narrative, “one can usually identify a *most reportable event*,” this is “the event that is least expected and has the greatest effect upon the needs and desires of the participants in the narrative.” According to Labov (2006), everything that precedes this crux essentially exists to set it up. Labov explains that stories find their origin in the process of what he calls “narrative pre-construction,” wherein a narrator begins with the most reportable event (generally the last one), then traces the causal chain of events that preceded that one, until arriving at the first “unreportable,” or purely ordinary and mundane, event (which is generally embedded in the orientation) (p. 39). Thus, as Young (2004) observes, beginnings do not really imply endings; rather, “ends entail beginnings” (p. 82). The beginning-ending frame determines the range of meaning of the story, because the choice of the first and final events—added to the story by the Telling-world narrator, since Taleworlds do not themselves have beginnings and endings—renders “consequential” what would be, without this frame, “merely consecutive” (Young, 2004, p. 82). This is why “sense of closure is a function of the perception of structure” (p. 81). Sense of meaning, sense of closure, sense of point and purpose depend upon story structure, upon managing the listener’s sense of consequentiality through framing.

Emphatic Evaluative Devices

A sense of consequentiality fulfills part of the need for sense-making. However, Labov and Waletzky (1967) observe that this alone is not sufficient. “Simple sequence of complication and result does not indicate to the listener the relative importance of these events or help him distinguish complication from resolution” (p. 33). Putting events in order is not sufficient to shape them meaningfully. Polanyi (1989) further explains the difficulty: “A storyworld is composed of innumerable states of affairs, and only a few are significant to the point being made in a given telling” (p. 22). If a narrative sequence were told all at a single pitch, with equal emphasis given to every event, a listener looking to map the story’s significance would be left without landmarks. In order to convey meaning to the listener, a teller must somehow signal the relative importance of certain narrative units. This meta-communicative weighting Labov and Waletzky (1967) dub “evaluation.”

Young (2004) explains that evaluation discloses perspectives, attitudes, and feelings toward events (p. 84). Polanyi (1989) explains that through emphasis created by linguistic and paralinguistic devices, “tellers evaluate key events most highly in order to distinguish them from other less important instantaneous main timeline events.” Events surrounding the ending and resolution, Young (2004) adds, require particular “differential weight” (p. 94). This weighting of narrative events, Polanyi (1989) says, “allows story recipients to build up a model of the relevant information in the text which matches the teller’s intentions as signaled by the manner in which the information about the storyworld is communicated” (p. 21). Polanyi even claims that the “core plot” (which she terms an “adequate paraphrase”) of a story can be discerned simply by analyzing the patterns of evaluation, by mapping what the teller chooses to emphasize (p. 26). Thus evaluative devices aid sense-making by apportioning emphasis among story elements.

Verbal and Gestural Evaluative Devices

In addition to structural and emphatic cues that help to create consequentiality and suggest significance, storytelling also features direct verbal and gestural evaluations that reveal attitudes toward the tale or the telling. Such evaluations “can be as aptly provided by hearers as tellers,” and can refer to either the Telling-world (“This is a good story”) or the Taleworld (“O how awful”) (Young, 1987, p. 57). When, as in the former example, the evaluations “bear on a realm of events rather than on events in the realm,” they are what Young calls “transfixial evaluations” (p. 58). Such evaluations can also “frame the events . . . as real or fictitious,” as when a teller insists, “This is a true story” (p. 55). In addition to such directly verbalized evaluations, others are paralinguistic or gestural—reactions such as laughter and applause also carry “the weight of evaluation,” though in such a case, “what is being evaluated can be inferred only by proximity” (Young, 1987, p. 58). In general, verbal and gestural evaluative devices serve as “instructions for hearing-as,” when they come from the teller, or “information on how a story has been heard,” when they come from the audience (pp. 59-60).

Filling the Gaps

The functional structure of narrative and the use of narrative frames to create a narrative occasion, manage expectation, and aid sense-making is well elaborated in existing research. What has been less thoroughly explored is precisely how a storyteller manages attention between these frames, what linguistic and paralinguistic devices serve to aid narrative framing and navigate transitions between boundaries, and most specifically, how this is done in professional storytelling performance contexts. This is the subject of my inquiry.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS: PART I, PREFACES

“One of the differences between written and oral narrative,” Young (1987) notes, “is that written narrative closes down on the thresholds between realms, circumscribing its own horizons by separating storyteller from hearers, by withdrawing story from conversation, fixing its form, and enclosing it in a book” (p. 14). Oral storytelling, in contrast, “plays on, out, and through the continuities between realms, particularly between contiguous realms like the story and the conversation” (p. 14). While a written narrative is a discrete, detached unit which may be experienced and understood at any time or place by any reader with the skills to decode it, an oral narrative is contextually situated, its meaning bound up in the event in which it unfolds.

For this reason, a study of an oral narrative performance must begin before the story’s beginning. Before the tale can begin, the background constants of the event, conversation, and performance realms must be negotiated, and the audience must be oriented to these constants. In essence, the audience needs a basic roadmap. If they are to be “transported,” they need a clear sense of where their starting point is, and at least some idea of where the teller intends to take them. They also need to understand what their role will be in the performance, and they need to be willing and prepared to participate. Much of the work that a teller does is to set the stage by addressing these questions before the tale even begins. This stage-setting is the subject of this section.

This need to set the stage is, in most ways, unique to live performance storytelling. In conversational narrative, the “continuities between realms” are provided by the context of the conversation in which the narrative occurs. In contrast, when a storyteller steps on stage, though the Event has provided a vague backdrop, no conversation yet exists between the teller and the audience that can naturally give rise to a story by virtue of its topical relevance. While ordinary

conversation provides context for narratives situationally, storytellers must shape the context intentionally. Performance storytelling begins with a less defined canvas, and so requires additional layering. Before beginning, tellers must first shape the Realm of Conversation and the Telling-world.

In general, I found that in most of the performances studied here, the tellers spent a surprising amount of stage time focused on the Realm of Conversation and the Telling-world. Although stage time is precious at storytelling festivals, a surprising percentage of each performance—in one notable example, a striking 32%—is devoted to what Young (1987) calls the “preface” (pp. 36-46), the introductory and preparatory material that a teller presents before the tale itself even begins.¹⁰ This suggests that far from being a mere accessory, the preface serves a vital role in stage storytelling.

¹⁰ It should be noted, however, that this method is not necessarily representative of all performance storytellers. Not all tellers favor lengthy prefaces—some launch directly into stories as soon as they get on stage. Sometimes, tellers might let the event itself serve as their background, or let the emcee or their own reputations be introduction enough. They might also let the telling of the story itself serve some of these functions—this is the case particularly with tellers of personal stories, whose conversational style allows them to transition naturally. Additionally, tellers might adopt an aesthetic that falls further toward the performative than the conversational end of the storytelling scale, and downgrade building conversational rapport in favor of posing the tale and the telling as an autonomous aesthetic object within the event frame, akin to a book, a play, or a film. There are thus many ways to set the stage. Because my aim is to explore how tellers navigate frames linguistically, my analysis favors the conversational style. Thus this examination of prefaces is not meant to be an exhaustive treatment of the methods tellers use to set the stage for their telling, but an exploration of the basic functions of this performance “preface,” whether it is accomplished conversationally, as in this study’s examples, or as part of the event frame and the telling itself.

However they accomplish this preface, in many words or few, a storyteller's first task onstage is to artfully create a space and then invite the audience into it. Before launching toward the heights of imaginal realms, they must first ground themselves and the audience, inviting their attention and orienting them toward their destination. If a teller fails to focus audience attention properly before beginning, then the groundwork is not set for meaning-making. In at least some sense, no story has taken place, because, unlike the proverbial tree falling in the forest, if a story is told and no one is there who hears and attends it, then it did not happen. This kind of grounding is thus prerequisite to meaningful communication of a narrative.

Prefaces serve several functions, though each function is essentially aimed at focusing attention. Young (1987) notes that the primary function of prefaces is to “ask[] for the right to produce extended talk,” and perhaps to promise “that the talk will be interesting” (p. 38) and to spark “interest in the events or the story” (p.39). In my examination of these performances, I found three additional basic functions that prefaces serve in performance storytelling. In order to ground audience attention, a storyteller shapes a preface to: 1) establish a starting point, shaping the immediate conversation, 2) clear the ground of distractions, and 3) orient the audience to the Telling-world.

Establishing a Starting Point

First, a preface establishes a starting point. For the teller and the audience to travel or “transport” together, naturally it helps if they begin in the same place. In conversation, this foundation is already established—the starting point is the point where the story launches from the conversation. Performance storytellers, on the other hand, begin with an empty stage, and so need to create this common launching point. The audience members in any given performance are coming from different lives and backgrounds, from different conversations, from different

thoughts. At the beginning of a performance, they are still trailing the background of their day, their concerns, or their private reflections. To successfully create a unified group that can experience the same story imagery together, the teller needs to first gather their focus to a common point. Audience members are like travelers milling about at a station, and the storyteller needs to make sure they all get on the same train.

The teller establishes a starting point, shaping the conversation for a particular performance. This might involve framing either the Event Realm or the Realm of Conversation, or both. While Young's "Realm of Conversation" and Bauman's "Event Realm" are at times roughly equivalent, I differentiate them here in order to differentiate between two levels of "Event" or "Conversation" at play at a storytelling festival. Both refer to the wider world, but in different ways. Because the festival itself is an enclave in everyday reality, and because it contributes its own mythos and its own way of shaping the experiences of attendees, I designate it the "Event Realm." At a festival, the Event Realm is the backdrop against which every individual performance occurs. Though its framing is mostly outside any individual telling, tellers often contribute to shaping it. This level of Event Realm—the festivals themselves, their venues, their histories, their leadership and communities—is largely beyond the scope of this study. While I will give basic sketches of the larger event platform when it is relevant, I will primarily focus on how the performers themselves interact with the frames in play, in each performance's immediate context.

Shaping the Realm of Conversation

This immediate context is what I will refer to by Young's term "Realm of Conversation." While in each performance the audience relates to and is influenced by the shape of the event as a whole, they are also interacting with this sub-event. Each performance is a conversation within

a wider conversation. This conversation, too, needs to be mediated, and tellers expend considerable effort—and sometimes a surprising amount of stage time—shaping it. To shape this Realm of Conversation within the overall Event is one of the primary functions of a preface; I found in my observations that every performance sample included a preface that fulfilled this function.

Generally, I found that Morden and Murphy accomplished this through synchronic repetition. Tannen (2007) notes that “Episodes within a larger conversation are often bounded by repetitions at the beginning, which operate as a kind of theme-setting, and at the end, forming a kind of coda” (p. 77). In the same way, tellers often begin a story or a set by introducing a theme. They introduce an idea, a character, an object, or even a single word, which through later repetition becomes a through-line that links the Realm of Conversation with the Taleworld. Introducing this repeated element at the beginning draws audience focus in to a single point and orients them toward what is to follow.

Morden often accomplishes this by drawing attention to story themes, as in this preface to *Tatterhood*:

1. Before I begin...
2. we should give thanks
3. for the don'ts.

In the initial lines, he employs syntactic repetition and anaphora, repeating a “Don’t” + verb + object structure, and beginning four consecutive lines with “Don’t.”

4. “Don’t look over your shoulder.”
5. “Don’t taste from that tree,” that’s a good one.
6. “Don’t stray from the path,”
7. “Don’t open that box.”

In total, the word “don’t” appears seven times in the first 17 lines:

16. The don'ts..are the vital imperfection.
17. When I hear a “don’t” in a story,

18. I think
19. “Ah...
20. this one’s for me.”

Interestingly, three of those times, it appears as a noun, rather than as its standard imperative verb and negative particle. This gives it the weight of not just a word, but a concept, even a mythological force. At the same time, opting to use “don’ts” rather than “interdictions” or “prohibitions,” in addition to keeping the tone from becoming stuffy, also preserves the sense of reported speech, the sense of a voice who commands, “Don’t.” Indeed, the other four times the word appears as a sort of reported speech, with the referenced sources omitted. Presenting the interdictions while omitting the speaker gives the sense of a single, prohibiting force, the “Don’t” itself, the mythological superego, further underscoring Morden’s theme.

On the other hand, he does not omit the *recipients* of the interdiction, naming those especially who violate the “Don’ts.” Alluding to fallen mythological figures—Eve, Pandora, and Achilles—he further develops this motif, employing these diachronic repetitions to invoke a thematic history:

37. Achilles, give thanks for your heel.
38. Without it you’d have been forgotten long ago.
39. (Laughter, applause)
40. And I thank you, Eve.
41. I thank you, Pandora.

Of about 400 lines in this performance block, this introductory (and interdictory) preface comprises 59, nearly 15%. It represents a considerable investment of time, but it does important work. Morden uses this time to offer a kind of “abstract,” but not of the Taleworld, or at least, not of its events. Rather, it summarizes the story’s theme. It provides a launching point for the story, which in ordinary conversation would have been provided by context.

With this accomplished, Morden has set up a fulcrum that he can play around throughout the telling. Because the preface has given the audience information on how to monitor the story for certain themes, they will be prepared to make connections between the Taleworld and the Realm of Conversation whenever he drops the suggestion. They are primed to listen for the “don’ts.” Having given the word such weight, Morden can invoke it repeatedly in Taleworld speech, knowing that the audience will be automatically signaled to its importance. By framing the conversation in this way, he ensures that rather than getting lost unreflectively in the Taleworld, the audience will constantly be making Realm-of-Conversation connections.

Morden’s preface to *The King of the Herrings* is similarly aimed at shaping the conversation. Rather than introducing the story by its theme, this one introduces the story by its genre and eponymous main character, also making links to local history:

1. There are many stories about Jack.
2. (Laughter, murmurs and a cheer)
3. I uh, told one yesterday...
4. and beforehand, the emcee introduced the story I was telling by saying,
5. “Ray Hicks, long ago, was telling Jack Tales here, and it’s wonderful to have a Jack Tale
6. today
7. from, from Wales.”
8. The story I told was called “The Fiery Dragon,”
9. and I made my way up to the merchandise tent afterwards, to the um,
10. marketplace, have a look for Ray Hicks’
11. books and
12. CD’s.
13. Picked up a “Four Jack Tales”
14. CD.
15. From Ray Hicks.
16. Turned it over,
17. “Jack and the Old Fire Dragon.”

Morden again begins his performance by shaping the Realm of Conversation and orienting the audience toward the story, this time introducing it by its genre, a Jack Tale. In doing so, he also contributes to the Event Realm by invoking festival tradition to frame the performance.

With a diachronic repetition, referring to his own past performance, and to past performances of Ray Hicks, he forges a link between his own tradition and the local one, creating a sense of continuity. Now, telling this story also becomes a way of honoring this festival, this stage, and its history and notable figures.

While tellers can provide the audience with a starting point by introducing them to story facets such as theme or genre, shaping the preface conversation to fit the story, they can also do the reverse, shaping the *story* to fit a conceit established in the *preface*. For instance, a teller might do this by referencing apparently unrelated ordinary-world or Event-Realm elements and then linking them to the tale. In one such example, Murphy prefaces *The Gypsy and the Devil* by facetiously naming another festival teller as the theme of her set:

31. So, it is—
32. amazing to see so many faces in here,
33. for this set,
34. obviously everyone is here to see—
35. Bil Lepp. So...
36. (Laughter)
37. Um, knowing that,
38. you know I came here knowing that, and um,
39. I decided to choose my stories—
40. based around Bil's character.
41. (Laughter)

Here, she plays with a feature of the overall event. The festival is broken into hour blocks, and most blocks are shared by two tellers, with half an hour for each. Generally, audience members remain in the tent for both tellers, as a matter of etiquette. As Bil Lepp is one of the most popular festival tellers, it is inevitable in such a block that many audience members will be in the tent primarily to see him. Murphy precedes him in this block. With a good-natured nod, she deals with any possible audience impatience to see Lepp.

At the same time, she sets the stage for a running joke that she can invoke repeatedly in order to thematically structure her set. Though in truth Lepp has little to do with the stories—

except to serve as an extra punch line—the connection gives the audience a point of focus. It also serves as a Realm of Conversation setup for the Taleworld, cuing the audience that the payoff will be inside. In this way, she begins already to funnel attention toward the Taleworld, and builds a link between the Realm of Conversation and the Taleworld that she can play on repeatedly. By the end of each story, the audience expects to have seen Bil somewhere—likely manifested, as the joke goes, as some unsavory character. This enhances audience focus by encouraging them to monitor the Taleworld characters and events for the punch line. She encourages this, quipping,

- 47. I'll leave it up to you
- 48. to glean
- 49. which character inspired me to choose that story,
- 50. um, to do with Bil.

Leaving this unsaid not only makes for a stronger joke, it also enhances attention, ensuring that the audience will be monitoring the stories for the payoff.

Her preface also plays on another facet of the event frame—the persona, the reputation, and the character of Bil Lepp. Lepp is famous as a festival trickster, as a mischievous teller of tall tales, and as a champion liar. It is evident from the laughter in line 41 that the audience is familiar with this reputation. With this setup, Murphy invokes insider festival knowledge, bringing everyone in on an inside joke. This bit of diachronic repetition serves as an involvement strategy that focuses the Realm of Conversation and links it to the Taleworld. The true function of the repetition of the “Bil” joke, then, is not theme. These stories are not actually *about* Lepp. Each of them could be told without him. Rather, connection to Lepp serves to provide grounding for the audience, offering them both a starting point and an anchoring link between something they know and the unknown Taleworld to follow.

Shaping the Event Realm

In the interesting episode that follows Murphy's story about the Devil, Lepp and Murphy interact directly:

- 355. Now, I'm not here,
- 356. I'm not here to put thoughts in your head,
- 357. *you* decide where Bil Lepp inspired me in that story.
- 358. (Laughter)
- 359. It's totally up to you.

Seated in the audience, Bil Lepp cites part of Clare's earlier description of the Devil, shouting,

- 357. (Bil: "Tall and handsome!")

Sounding dubious, Clare responds:

- 358. *Laughs* "Tall and handsome."
- 359. Uhh...however you want to interpret it, it's—it's fine.
- 360. (Laughter)

This brief interaction does double duty as both the coda of the first story of the set and the preface to the second. Although it is apparently spontaneous, it becomes part of the performance. It also becomes a part of the audience's experience and interpretation of the overall event.

Part of the Event Realm, in the enclave that is a storytelling festival, is the storytellers' relationships to each other. For the most part, the only relationships that persist as background constants are these, as the tellers are the only permanent fixtures. As fixtures of the festival, they also enjoy a small-world celebrity status. Here, Murphy's playful needling of Lepp is only one installment in a feud that continues throughout the festival weekend. By letting the audience in on the joke, Murphy allows them to partake vicariously in their relationship, and hence in their celebrity status. Murphy's establishment of this running gag serves not only to define the Realm of Conversation, but to ground the set—and the audience—within the overall Event.

The final story in Murphy's "Bil" set is another one whose preface helps to frame the overall Event. Speaking of the festival and the community of storytellers, Murphy again invites the audience to share in teller relationships:

12. We get together at these festivals around the world,
13. and you see these friends maybe once a year, maybe once every couple years.
14. And we come in, and we have the strangest conversations
15. around the kitchen table.
16. Or right before we go onstage.

She invokes a scene of community, figuratively inviting the audience to have a seat around the storytellers' kitchen table. Then, in a transition that does not seem to have any logical continuity, but makes thematic sense, she switches over to making references to some specific festival performances:

17. And we're always talking about the same thing, and I watched Bil
18. tell his
19. skunk story last night, how many of you saw that?
20. (Laughter and applause)
21. And uh, and I watched Kevin
22. tell his marathon story last night, did you see that?

Her direct questions, and the conversational interaction they imply, invite the audience to share a privileged space with her. Underscoring this, the diachronic repetition—referencing tales told by other tellers—reinforces the notion that audience members are part of a select group who have shared unique experiences. This contributes to the event frame as a whole: this event, she suggests, is about community.

Morden also directly references the festival in one of his prefaces, contributing to the event frame. In *The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew*, he begins with a mini-narrative about attending the festival, telling the audience the story of how Ed Stivender was so shocked at Morden's turning the festival down, that his reaction alone inspired Morden to attend. Telling this story seems like an interesting choice—why tell a story about having turned down this very

festival? For one thing, Stivender is a teller that the audience already knows, a festival favorite. Mentioning him helps the audience to place Morden—a new and unfamiliar teller—in the web of connections that is part of the Event Realm, so that he does not seem like a stranger. Further, this story is a nod to the audience, a citation of *their* fame, and the fame of their festival, to put them on a level with him. This becomes a way to even the field and foster trust after the emcee's glowing (and likely intimidating) encomium. It also contributes to the audience's experience of the Event Realm, shaping their interpretation of the festival as a whole. As the festival's audience, they share a part of its fame; Morden's reference turns them into an elite community. In this way, a preface can establish a starting point by anchoring the audience in the Event Realm, giving them something in common.

Clearing the Ground

In addition to shaping the event or conversation and inviting the audience into the enclave, the teller often needs to clear the ground of distractions. From physical discomfort to auditory distraction, the event presents several constraints on the telling that make it more difficult to establish an enclave and to center the audience's focus. Realizing that conflict in the minds of the audience needs to be addressed before they can continue, tellers often aim story prefaces at overcoming such potential distractions.

For instance, in *The Gypsy and the Devil*, Murphy opens by immediately focusing on clearing the ground of Event Realm distractions, specifically microphone and sound issues.

8. Can you hear me?
9. (Audience response)

Microphone and sound issues are a frequent Event Realm constraint on the telling, making creating an enclave and maintaining attention more difficult. Her acknowledgment of the issue is likely to draw attention toward the problem, rather than away from it. She recognizes, however,

that conflict in the minds of the audience needs to be addressed before it can be dispelled, and so does not shy from discussing sound problems directly. She rewards the audience's patience in dealing with these concerns with humor:

10. Well! *laugh*
11. That was amazing.
12. 50% of you said no.
13. Um, can you hear me at the back?
14. (Audience response)
15. Um, ok. I'll stop joking, then, put your hands up if you *can't* hear me.

As she tries to address the problem, she draws attention to a specific aspect of the Event Realm—the man in charge of the sound—that is traditionally invisible:

18. Can we
19. put that up any higher?
20. The magic man, Kenyan, is over there, and he's gonna fix things[.]

She even calls the sound man by name, suggesting a sense of community and reliability, assuaging the audience's concerns. Now they all know the sound man, "the magic man, Kenyan," and they know that "he's gonna fix things." The audience can let their concerns rest.

20. The magic man, Kenyan, is over there, and he's gonna fix things,
21. and I'm gonna talk really loudly.
22. (cheering)
23. Yeah?
24. (Applause)
25. Thank you.

In lines 20-23, she signals that she would like to move on, and indirectly asks the audience if that is all right with them. She proposes to "talk *really loudly*," and the audience cheering in line 22 signals approval to move on. With her one-word "Yeah?" in line 23, she again asks for a ticket to move on. The audience applauds, signaling that they approve the suggestion. This represents a sort of group agreement to disregard the mic and sound issues, and serves as a ticket to continue. This way, even if it takes a while for the sound issues to resolve,

Murphy has done everything she can to ensure that these distractions will not fray the audience's focus.

Sometimes, the potential distraction that needs to be cleared is subtler and less definable than technical issues. This is exemplified in Murphy's preface to *Monkey Heart*. In this one, the bulk of the preface is actually a game that she plays with the audience. With its own ticket and orientation, the game is set apart in its own enclave. It takes up precious stage time. Murphy is not merely playing games, however, and she certainly is not wasting time. The game, along with the rest of the preface, is a calculated move to address a perceived distraction.

Clare begins this set—as she begins most sets—with a cheery “Hello!”

1. Hello!
2. (“Hello.”)
3. How are you?
4. (“Good.”)

This standard opener is friendly and conversational, and engages the audience directly, inviting a response. In doing so, it also primes the audience to respond to her again later, and thus begins inducting them into the conventions of her performance, serving as Telling-world orientation.

More important for this set, however, is how Murphy uses this opener as a gauge. Having invited the audience to vocally respond to her greeting, she uses the tone of their response to measure their energy level and willingness to engage. She follows up with, “How are you?” in line 3, continuing her diagnostic. When the audience offers a polite “Good” in response, she knows that she will have to work to raise their energy level.

She begins by asking the audience to stand up. Lines 5-17 are all devoted to asking the audience to “wiggle”:

5. Everyone please, stand up.
6. Take your hands,
7. wiggle ‘em.

8. Now,
9. I'm gonna show you what to do with the other part of yourself, but you don't have to turn around, you just need to take your bum,
10. and you're gonna wiggle it like this.
11. Go on, wiggle it.
12. You've been sittin' for ages!
13. (Laughter)
14. Wiggle your bums.
15. Good wiggle.
16. It's ok, no one's looking at you.
17. (Laughter)

This facilitates participation, alertness and engagement. It is also a respectful nod to the audience's limitations, and how certain Event Realm constraints strain physical comfort and mental focus. "You've been sittin' for ages!" she commiserates in line 12. She realizes again that conflict in the minds of the audience must be addressed if it is not to stretch and potentially break the frame. This exercise also orients the audience to the Telling-world, marking this performance block as an event for the young—or at least an event at which everyone present is going to be young for now. For the self-conscious, she assists in breaking barriers: "It's ok, no one's looking at you."

She follows up by checking on microphone issues.

18. And sit back down.
19. *Sigh* Now.
20. Can you hear me all right?
21. Yeah?
22. I don't like those microphones, they get in my way, 'cause you know I like to move.

Again, Murphy addresses an Event Realm constraint, one with which she hints the audience may be familiar. She has had problems with the festival microphones before, as she likes to use the wireless earpiece, rather than the bulky stand microphone. "You know I like to move," she explains. She builds rapport with her suggestion of familiarity. "You know me," she seems to say.

In this introduction, it is as if she is ticking off potential conflicts one by one, carefully addressing each one before attempting to move further. Checking audience comfort, easing self-consciousness, then taking care of sound issues, she clears the ground and puts people at ease.

Finally, she moves on to the game.

23. So you look very intelligent,
24. are you very intelligent?
25. (Responses)
26. All right.
27. Repeat after me:

This bit of good-natured flattery also serves as the ticket for this enclave. Throughout the game, she continues to encourage them with similar language:

- Line 49, “‘cause you’re very smart.”
- Line 52, “because you’re very intelligent you’ll get it.”
- Line 133, “That’s impressive.”
- Line 143, “I’ve never seen people go so fast.”

Such comments might be aimed at the younger members of the group, but they also have the effect of stoking the energy higher, turning this into a challenge. It seems that Murphy senses, after the audience’s lack of enthusiasm in responding to her initial greeting, that they are unenergetic and inhibited. Stoking them further, she challenges them to greater speed, as in lines 119, 135-137, and 144, even joking in lines 121-122 that she’s “comparing” the audience “to other countries” (see Appendix A). She accelerates the game until they can go no faster. At the conclusion of the game in line 150, it is unclear who the audience is applauding, but it seems to be themselves. At this point, they are bonded as a community. She gave them a common goal—to do it faster, and to beat her expectations—that united them. Notably, their responses have warmed considerably, from a polite “good” to genuine laughter and applause. In this way, Murphy’s game clears the ground of distractions by addressing their fatigue, preparing and enabling the audience to participate in the upcoming story.

Telling-World Orientation

Lastly, tellers often use prefaces to establish a destination, or a route, by directing focus to the Telling-world. Interestingly, I found in these samples that performance storytellers often draw more attention to the Telling-world than would be expected in conversational narrative. Young (1987) notes that the purpose of the Telling-world is generally to draw attention away from itself, and toward the Taleworld (p. 17). As a result, she notes that in conversational storytelling, relatively few lines are devoted to the Telling-world itself. In contrast, I found that the professional storytelling performance samples that I studied broke from this pattern. In these contexts, more time is spent framing the event as a performance, and this seems to be important to shaping the story, performance, and event alike.

In some instances, the teller creates Telling-world awareness by talking about the story itself, as a story. For instance, in Murphy's performance of *Monkey Heart*, she begins by drawing attention to the process of story selection:

- 151. So...
- 152. *Sigh* What'll I tell ya?
- 153. All kinds 'a stories racin' around in my head, arguing with each other which one wants to be told.
- 154. Let me see...

It is not uncommon for Murphy to do this. While it does seem to be genuine indecision, there also seems to be more purpose to it than simply thinking out loud. Referring to her stories this way moves the focus toward the Telling-world, as she prepares to shift the audience into the Taleworld. It does not do so invisibly, however; rather, it draws attention to the Telling-world directly, and heightens the awareness that Murphy is, and will be, performing. Though Murphy is dialoguing with herself—as she notes in line 161—it is clearly for the benefit of the audience. She is characterizing the stories, giving them personalities. They “rac[e] around in [her] head”

and argu[e] with each other” about which will be told (line 153). This marks whatever story she tells as the winner, lending whatever she chooses an air of almost mystical rightness and inevitability—this is the story that was *meant* to be told here. This awareness of the Telling-world, then, serves to create reflection about the story as a story, and prepares the audience for a performance.

In *Meat of the Tongue*, the focus on the Telling-world is more pronounced, and not just for the sake of utility. This time, Murphy frames the event as a performance in order to introduce specific aspects of the telling that the audience needs to be primed to anticipate:

15. And uh,
16. you might have noticed *whispered* *there's a man over there*.
17. (Murmurs and laughter)
18. I mean you, Jim, I mean you. *Whispered*
19. (Laughter)
20. Are, are you gonna stay all the way over there?
21. Just that...
22. you just feel so far away.
23. (Laughter)
24. We're gonna be working together here,
25. so...

Murphy sets up the Telling-world in the preface by drawing attention to the sign-language interpreter on the stage. In doing so, she frames the Telling-world by drawing attention to one of the invisible constants of the Event Realm:

52. Because he's a very important part of this stage,
53. he's a very important part of the storytelling festival,
54. he's doing very hard work.
55. (Applause, cheering)
56. And if he stays over there,
57. he'll be invisible,
58. and I'd much rather play with him during the story as well.

This has multiple effects. One, paradoxically, is to make a potential distraction less obtrusive. By transposing a potentially distracting element of the Event Realm into the Telling-

world, she frees the audience to notice this element without it drawing them out of the frame. This is only part of the effect, however. More importantly, this introduction prepares the audience for her interaction with the interpreter, which becomes the designing principle for the entire performance. With this established, she can constantly play over the boundaries of Taleworld and Telling-world like a fulcrum, and the audience will be able to follow. She takes full advantage of this. Multiple times throughout the story, she breaks the Taleworld frame by incorporating the interpreter into the Telling-world, drawing attention to his humorous gestures. The audience, who know to anticipate this, laugh every time. In letting the audience know to expect Murphy's interactions with the interpreter, the preface orients the audience to the constants of the Telling-world.

Lastly, this Telling-world awareness responds to certain constants of the event frame. This evening event was held at the SCERA Shell, a venue in Orem, UT that holds thousands of people. To hold the attention of a crowd this size requires a high-power performance. Humor is an effective tool, here, and the humor of Murphy's interactions with the interpreter certainly helps to maintain attention. Perhaps more importantly, though, the extra shoring up of the Telling-world helps to keep attention on what is happening on-stage. In such a venue, attention to the Telling-world—though it can also serve to funnel attention toward the Taleworld—becomes an end in itself.

While prefaces like Murphy's *Meat of the Tongue* preface orient the audience to what the performer will be doing in the Telling-world, others, such as Morden's preface to *The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew*, orient the audience to their *own* role in the performance. In this preface, he spends considerable time giving the audience the history of the Wood family, the family of Romani gypsies with whom this story originated.

- 51. Much of what they did was tell stories,
- 52. men and women..
- 53. would tell stories,
- 54. in this family.
- 55. Around the fire,
- 56. under the light of the stars and the moon.

This is not just a history lesson, however. Atmospheric lines like 55-56, with their evocative details, suggest that this part of the preface is not just informational. Rather, it is about mood. It suggests that he is not just telling a story; he is trying to re-create an experience. He is giving the audience information on how to listen to the tale, expressing his hope that they will not listen as a modern audience, but will listen as if they were “around the fire, under the light of the stars and the moon.” In this way, much of this extensive preface serves as a kind of orientation, but for the Telling-world, rather than the Taleworld. It teaches the audience how to interact with the story, informing them about their part in the telling. Only, rather than priming them for vocal participation, the way that Murphy often does, it prepares them to know how to listen and engage internally.

- 136. So..I, I’m gonna share some of those stories with you now.
- 137. Now, the Woods had an advantage over me..
- 138. many advantages, one being that they were..*amazing* storytellers.
- 139. Uh, they were also
- 140. familiar with their audience.
- 141. Their audience were friends.
- 142. So, there was..an interaction..around the fire,
- 143. between the teller and the listener,
- 144. that is slightly more difficult,
- 145. here.
- 146. The storytellers were..
- 147. very passionate.

In line 137, after concluding the narratives about the Woods, he gets to the crux of why he has offered this history—he needs the audience to contribute to the Telling-world in a

particular way, in a way that he says that he cannot. In lines 168-170, he directly defines how he wants the audience to participate in the Telling-world:

- 168. So, you're gonna have ta—
- 169. you're American,
- 170. you *do* passion!
- 171. (Laughter)
- 172. You *do* passion.

Asking the audience to contribute their passion to the telling serves as a sort of orientation, but of the Telling-world, rather than the Taleworld. The goal of this orientation is to establish a certain kind of participation as a background constant of the performance. The audience will not be contributing very much vocally; rather, he is preparing the audience to be passionate *listeners*. By orienting the audience to this Telling-world necessity, he gracefully establishes a system where responsibility for the telling, and its success, is shared.

Summary

Young notes that in conversational narrative, a preface is generally only “an utterance,” a single sentence. In stage storytelling, however, prefaces are often extended, taking up as much as a third of performance time—they could even be said to be as much a part of the performance as the story itself. This difference is likely due to the additional functions that prefaces serve in professional storytelling performances. In conversational narrative, the primary function of a preface is to “ask for the right to produce extended talk” (Young, 1987, p. 38). In performance storytelling, however, the right of extended talk is already granted by the event. While tellers often graciously ask for it all the same, giving the audience the opportunity to signal their willing participation, this is far from a preface’s only function. Beyond establishing willing participation, the preface needs to orient the audience to what they will be participating in, and how they will be participating. In the preface of a story, therefore, storytellers ground the audience and invite

their attention by: 1) establishing a starting point, shaping the immediate conversation, 2) clearing the ground of distractions, and 3) orienting the audience to the Telling-world, and to their role in the performance.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS: PART II, EDGEWORK

Having captured audience attention by setting the stage, dismissing distractions, and establishing rapport, a storyteller prepares to guide that attention from the Event Realm and toward the Telling-world, and finally into the deepest realm, and the point of most heightened attention. Young (1987) explains that these realms “open out onto one another in such a way that the innermost or deepest realm is the Taleworld, a realm of unfolding events and enacting characters” (p. 24). Thus a teller shifts attention from the conversation or event to the telling, and from the telling to the story-world events.

These realms have deep differences, however, and thus the boundaries between them are potentially jarring. To prepare the audience for different background constants, different rules for interaction, even different realities, as the telling switches to imaginary space and time, requires artful navigation. To aid this navigation, “Information about [these] differences is stacked at the edges of events” (Young, 1987, p. 22). As a teller transitions from the Event Realm to the Telling-world, from the Telling-world to the Taleworld, and back again, she negotiates differences between these realms through framing, creating for the audience an angle of entry into each new mode of presentation. “It is for this reason that frames . . . are characteristically positioned between realms” (*id.*). In this way, frames accomplish what Young calls “edgework” for stories (*id.*). This chapter analyzes this “edgework,” how storytellers shift attention across boundaries into the Taleworld.

In the transcripts I examined, I found that the tellers navigate boundaries by employing heavy layers of “involvement strategies” (Tannen, 2007, p. 32). While involvement strategies can be found throughout a performance, I found that they are uniquely clustered around moments of transition, and specifically around realm boundary shifts. These strategies, such as repetition,

rhythm, image, and detail, help to hold and guide audience attention throughout boundary shifts that might otherwise derail the telling.

Openings

Because “story enclaves are a different order of discourse from the conversation that encloses them,” as “a representation of events not present to the occasion” (Young, 1987, p. 31), they require a frame to introduce this new order of discourse to the audience. This frame Young names an “opening.” She distinguishes these from beginnings, noting that beginnings and endings mark the points where the Taleworld events start and finish, whereas openings and closings mark the points where the *telling* starts and finishes (p. 31). In contrast to prefaces, which may be extended, openings are usually brief, often only a line or two that “neatly bracket” the beginning (p. 33). In performance storytelling, even these brief transitions feature involvement strategies that are artfully designed to ease the transition across boundaries and to funnel attention toward the Taleworld.

Formulaic Openings: Diachronic Repetition

The opening to Morden’s *Tatterhood* is a simple “Once upon a time.”

- 56. I’d also like to thank Ed Stivender.
- 57. (Laughter)
- 58. For this *wonderful spoon*.
- 59. (Applause)
- 60. Once upon a time there was a perfect palace.

“Once upon a time” is, of course, a formula the audience will recognize. The meaning that it carries is not the literal meaning of the words—parsed literally, it is essentially nonsense. Rather, it derives its meaning from the diachronic repetition of a story-beginning formula passed down from murky origins through countless tellings. The referent of the phrase is not the content of the

words themselves, but rather the social understanding that a story is beginning. Here, this formulaic opening serves two purposes: it signals a transition, and sets the realm status.

First, it signals a transition. After his opening soliloquy about “don’ts”—and his brief, unexplained comment about the spoon—he gives this story no other prelude. The odd spoon comment opens a parenthesis, raising questions in the minds of the audience concerning how the spoon fits in to the telling. Rather than quieting these questions, he instead turns the energy of the unanswered question into forward momentum, with an implicit promise that this parenthesis will be closed later. In order to accomplish this abrupt shift, however, he needs to clearly mark the transition into the story in a way that will carry audience attention, and not leave them wondering about the spoon. Because audiences are trained to recognize and respond to “Once upon a time,” this formulaic opening allows him to effect this abrupt shift.

This opening also facilitates entry into the Taleworld by setting up genre expectations. Young (2004) explains that when an opening is formulaic, “such as ‘Once upon a time,’” the opening not only marks “a discontinuity in the order of discourse,” but also reveals “the realm status of the enclave as fairy-tale-like” (p. 84). While the formula is short, it is also packed with information about this boundary shift—the audience knows now that the world they are entering has a different set of rules, and so are prepared to encounter magic, witches’ curses, and even a girl with a cow’s head without letting such elements shatter their suspension of disbelief. With its mapping of expectations, this opening thus smooths transition into the Taleworld.

This “Once upon a time” formula also appears in *The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew*, but interestingly, in this instance, it appears within the Taleworld as reported speech. *Leaves* is a frame story, and thus has two openings. In this second one, opening another set of narrative parentheses, Morden employs a Taleworld-embedded ticket:

267. She said,
268. “Listen to me,
269. and I will tell you a story.
270. Perhaps...it will stop
271. one..little..tear..”
272. *Bell*
273. “Once upon a time there lived a young woman called Anwen.”

This use of “Once upon a time” as reported speech is an interesting mimicking of storytelling conventions. Deployed this way, it straddles across frame boundaries. On the one hand, its intended audience is in the Taleworld—it is directed at the character to whom this story is being told. It also serves, however, as another Telling-world cue for the audience, setting this story off from the main narrative and opening yet another enclave. It brings them one Taleworld level deeper, opening another parenthesis in their minds. Additionally, the opening marks this story-within-a-story with a fairytale-like realm status, whereas the main, outer narrative was not marked this way. The effect of this diachronic repetition—transferring this formulaic opening into Taleworld dialogue—is thus to create a sense of being in a deeper enclave in a stranger reality, in a dream within a dream. This strategy perfectly suits this wonder tale, which is full of dream-like imagery.

Murphy adopts a more casual, shorthand version of this formula in *The Sound of Money* and in *Chopsticks*. As if she were starting a conversation or a joke, she opens both stories with a gentle, “So once . . .”

The Sound of Money:

1. So once,
2. a long long time ago in the far far east [...]

Chopsticks:

28. So once,
29. long long ago, there were two best friends,
- ...

“So” serves as a ticket to transition, a shorthand for signaling the beginning of a new story.

Neither of these stories is the first in the set, so her previous momentum may help to smooth entry into new tales, allowing for a simpler opening.

While this opening is more casual than “Once upon a time,” it serves to map expectations in a similar fashion. First, it signals a short story. The conversational-sounding cue lets the audience know that this will be no more extensive than a typical conversational narrative. Fulfilling that expectation, both stories are only a few minutes long, taking fewer than 150 lines. Additionally, this opening also sets the realm status by establishing certain genre expectations. Myths, legends, and epics do not begin with a slipped-in “So once,” and a fairytale is not likely to, either. Murphy thus signals the audience to expect a simpler story type, such as a folktale or an allegory. Indeed, these two short stories, told in the same set, are a joke tale and a parable. In this way, a simple choice of opening phrase gives the audience a roadmap of what to expect, orienting them in only a few words. This orientation helps to ensure that they will not feel left behind and lose attention. Thus her formulaic beginning—a kind of diachronic repetition—helps to smooth the transition into the Taleworld.

Far, Far Away: Repetition, Rhythm, and Transport

Openings often suggest a sense of transport, a sense that is carried by their content and enhanced by involvement strategies like repetition and rhythm. For instance, concluding her story preface in *The Gypsy and the Devil*, Murphy transitions into the opening with a suggestion of travel:

- 52. So..
- 53. I'll see you out there.
- 54. Once...
- 55. a long, long, long time ago,
- 56. wandering the streets of Europe,

57. there was a very...lonely...gypsy.

“I’ll see you out there” evokes a sense of travel, suggesting that the teller and the audience will both be departing from the immediate surroundings and will meet in another place. It draws attention away from the Telling-world and toward the Taleworld by drawing attention away from the persona of Clare Murphy. Clare, she suggests, is going now, and the audience is invited to follow. She reinforces this sense of travel with the opening, “Once, a long, long, long time ago.” While it does not carry all the formulaic history of “Once upon a time,” beginning with “Once” is still enough to evoke this sense of transport into the Telling-world, letting the audience know that a story is beginning. It also sets the realm status, not as fairy-tale like, but still distant and exotic. She amplifies this effect with the rhythmic, repeated “long, long, long.”

Many of her tellings feature a similar pattern, like this opening to *Meat of the Tongue*:

60. So,
61. once, a long long long time ago
62. in a country far far away from here,
63. fa:r to the east,
...

Here, “long long long” mirrors “far far . . . far,” in both the triple repetition and the suggestion of distance, either in time or space. This repetition is not meant to suggest any actual triangulation of a time period or place. Rather, the repetition serves several artistic functions. First, each repetition adds emphasis. This eases the entry into the tale-world by adding to the sense of transport—the audience receives the suggestion that the place they’re going is far away from here and now. Furthermore, the repetition is softly rhythmic, with that lulling letter ‘l’ sound and whispering ‘f’ sound adding to the gently hypnotic effect. With this transporting effect, Murphy’s opening smooths the transition into the Taleworld.

In another instance, Murphy gives this sense of travel with a precise destination:

213. We are going to India where it's really, really hot.
214. A long long long long time ago in India,
215. one day
216. under the hot,
217. hot
218. sun
...

Evoking a destination and grounding the audience in key images—here, the “hot, hot sun”—she induces in the audience a sense of transport. This travelling effect also orients the audience simultaneously to the Telling-world and to the Taleworld, bringing attention to both the origin of the story being told and to its setting. Having begun this shift, she again packs repetition around the opening, naming India twice, and piling “really, really,” “long, long, long, long,” and “hot, hot sun” around it. The result is something like the steady swing of a hypnotist’s watch.

Opening Call-and-Response

Another form of repetition commonly found in openings involves a pattern of back-and-forth between audience and teller that generally goes by the name “call-and-response.” Before beginning *The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew*, Morden coaches his audience through his opening ritual:

199. Now when the teller began his or her story,
200. he or she would want to know the audience were ready.
201. And so, he or she would shout, “Socks!” and the audience had to shout back—
202. (“Boots!”)
203. (Laughter)
204. You see? I am among friends.
205. (Laughter)
...

Some audience members already know the established response, prompting surprised laughter from the rest. Morden takes the opportunity to reinforce the rapport associated with this ritual—“You see? I am among friends.” Those who know the signal feel themselves to be on the inside, and those who do not yet know it are initiated. This diachronic repetition, a pattern employed

across several performances, becomes a way to signal a story's opening as well as a way to signal rapport. Additionally, as Morden explains, this opening serves as a cultural marker, grounding the telling in the tradition of its original Welsh Romani tellers.

Following this introduction to the call-and-response, he gives the audience several repetitions to train them in it, and to allow them to signal their engagement and willingness to participate:

213. Socks!
214. ("Boots!")
215. Socks!
216. ("Boots!")
217. Socks!
218. ("Boots!")
219. Once, there was a weeping house.

As with "Once upon a time," the meaning of the exchange is not in the content of the words (though they may suggest putting on one's shoes for travel) but in their accepted, coded meaning as a signal for transition.

He employs this same call-and-response later in the festival at the beginning of *The King of the Herrings*:

16. Turned it over,
17. "Jack and the Old Fire Dragon."
18. (Laughter, cheer)
19. (Pause)
20. Socks!
21. ("Boots!")
22. Socks!
23. ("Boots!")
24. A quarryman and his wife
25. loved each other well.

Morden offers the call-and-response without coaching, and it is clear that most of the audience already knows it; in his previous performances, he has trained them to respond this way.

This repetition across performances suggests that this particular bit of discourse is actually on the level of ritual. According to Goodall (2000), “phatic communication exchanges” such as this one can be used to “reveal cultural patterns of . . . turn-taking sequences and the rules that enable and inform them,” and even “risky shifts or unexpected turns that elevate the level of exchange” (p. 103). Essentially, this call-and-response ritual is designed to mark a boundary. It opens the telling, functioning as an extension of the ticket, signaling the beginning of Morden’s extended turn. It employs ritual to reduce the “riskiness” of the shift into a different level of exchange. This level, ideally, will become what Goodall (2000) calls “dialogue,” “a kind of spiritual or unordinary ‘meeting,’” “a higher level of spontaneous mutuality,” one that “transcends the ordinary boundaries of self and other” (p. 104). Storytelling has the ability to create this, but it is a vulnerable space; a careless approach might feel threatening, or might fall flat. This ritual, a mix of synchronic and diachronic repetition, helps to smooth the transition.

Interestingly, this ritual also strongly resembles an actual conversational pattern of mimicking the speech of others, or “allo-repetition.” Tannen (2007) notes that repeating the words of other speakers “accomplishes a conversation,” “shows acceptance of others’ utterances, their participation, and them,” and “gives evidence of one’s own participation” (p. 61). All of this, she says, “sends a meta-message of involvement” (p. 61). With this call-and-response sequence, Morden invites the audience to mimic what in conversation would be taken “as a show of listenership” (p. 68). In designing his opening ritual this way, Morden invites his audience to send this meta-message of involvement, partly, perhaps, to him, but mostly to themselves—to signify to their own subconscious, and to each other, that they agree to this boundary shift. With this agreement, Morden is prepared to complete the shift into the Taleworld.

Beginnings

After a story's opening shifts attention to the Telling-world and opens the door onto the Taleworld, the beginning completes this process and shifts attention fully into the Taleworld, bringing the audience through the threshold and into the world of the story. In the same way that involvement strategies cluster around the opening, they also cluster around the story's beginning, smoothing the potentially bumpy transition into the Taleworld.

Image, Rhythm, and Repetition

In these samples, I found that image, rhythm, and repetition often work in tandem at the beginning of stories to stick key elements in the minds of the audience. For instance, in *The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew*, Morden combines these three strategies:

- 219. Once, there was a weeping house.
- 220. The dog wept in the yard outside.
- 221. The birds wept on the gutters.
- 222. Inside, the master, the owner of the house, sat at his table, sobbing,
- ...

The beginning here is strongly rhythmic, in a way that contributes to what Tannen (2007) calls “sound and sense” (p. 31). First, the sound of the rhythms in each of these lines involves the audience's ear. Morden delivers the first as a trochaic, 4-beat line. Lines two and three effect an almost singsong ballad meter, with a four-beat line followed by a three-beat line. Line four also follows this pattern, with seven beats that break into four (“Inside, the master, the owner of the house”) and three (“sat at his table, sobbing”), separated by a caesura. Tannen notes that such sound patterns “involve the audience” deeply, “sweeping them up” in “rhythmic ensemble, much as one is swept up by music and finds oneself moving in its rhythm” (*id.*). “In other words,” she says, “they become rhythmically involved” (p. 31). From the first line of this story, Morden lays down poetic rhythms that invite the audience to “become rhythmically involved.” The rhythm

also contributes to the sense, paralleling the flow of images. The ballad meter in lines two and three underscores the link between these lines' related images, binding the lines together as a single unit. A new unit begins in the fourth line, and the shift between these two units coincides with the movement from outside the house to inside. In this way, the rhythm provides a sort of soundtrack to match the panning of the camera. This rhythmic yet varied delivery smooths the transition into the Taleworld by enrapturing the audience with "sound" and easing the communication of "sense."

Repetition of words, sentence structures and images further enhances this effect. Woven through these rhythmically delivered lines is the image of weeping, described, in the first three lines, in sentences of roughly equivalent structure. In line four, variety is introduced to the structure, and "weeping" turns to "sobbing" to create an alliteration with "sat." The repetition of words, sounds, structures, and images, combined with the rhythm, lends this story's first few lines a mesmeric energy.

Murphy similarly pairs rhythm and imagery to draw audience attention toward a story's first elements:

- 54. Once...
- 55. a long, long, long time ago,
- 56. wandering the streets of Europe,
- 57. there was a very...lonely...gypsy.

In this telling, the first Taleworld image is the character of the wandering gypsy. Introducing this first image, Murphy slows considerably. The rhythm reins in, allowing the audience to get a good look. The trochaic "very...lonely...gypsy" further emphasizes this image. This pairing of rhythm and image entices the audience's focus, helping smooth the boundary into the Taleworld. Additionally, this stacked emphasis provides the audience with a Taleworld anchor and a memory aid, letting them know where to focus and what to remember.

She accomplishes a similar effect with a rhythmic, list-like intonation in *The Sound of Money*:

1. So once,
2. a long long time ago in the far far east where the
3. air smells of cinnamon and cardamom and honey and almonds,
4. there lived..
5. a very... *poor* student.

“Long, long” and “far, far” repeat in her characteristic fashion, carrying the audience away. She continues by setting the stage with a setting description, a list of sensory details. This list does not serve so much to enumerate individual scents as it does to create a rhythm and give the sense of atmosphere. Tannen (2007) explains that the “intensifying, list-like intonation” of such repetition serves to give an impression of many items, more than the list itself actually includes. “The meaning,” she says, “lies not in the meaning of the words, but in the patterned rhythm: the listing intonation” (p. 76). This serves to set the scene, affording an angle of entry into the Taleworld—the audience has a sense (and scents) of the setting. Furthermore, the lull of the “list-like intonation,” together with its accompanying polysyndeton, furthers the hypnotic effect, preparing the audience to enter the deepest level of story discourse.

Interestingly, these involvement strategies also parallel the process of hypnotic induction, of which rhythm is a key component. Thomason (2009), for instance, notes the importance of rhythm in inducing therapeutic trance, explaining that “rhythmic sonic stimulation” has a hypnotic effect on the hearer (p. 353). Murphy’s use of detail, and particularly the use of smells, is another hypnotic technique. The first step in hypnotic induction, as Abrahamson (1998) notes, is the fixation of attention. This is accomplished by encouraging listeners to “focus on sensations” and on “internal imagery” that “leads attention inward” (p. 444). Here, Murphy delivers potent sensations, appealing directly to her listeners’ most primitive sense. Thus through

both sound and sensation, Murphy's involvement strategies are designed to powerfully focus audience attention.

The difference between her Telling-world rhythm and Realm-of-Conversation speech is starkly illustrated by a sudden break from the Taleworld. Momentarily interrupting the scene she has begun to set, she disrupts the Taleworld with talk of the external world. She addresses the audience directly:

5. a very... *poor* student.
6. And maybe most of you have been students, and you remember what it was like,
and how you had to
7. eek a living out of those few dollars you had every week to make the food you
needed to eat—well this student was so poor,
8. he spent all of his money
9. on his books.

This interruption breaks from both the Taleworld and the Telling-world. Just as the content departs from the Taleworld, the style departs from the Telling. Murphy drops her rhythm, her repetition, her imagery carefully parceled into digestible idea units, and breaks into ordinary prose. In contrast to her usual short, rhythmic lines, these lines sprawl. When she returns, mid-sentence, mid-line, back to the Telling and Taleworld, it is immediately apparent from the shift in rhythm and line length that this is a different order of discourse. Thus the rhythm is both a signal to the audience that they have entered the Telling-world, and a lulling beat that invites their attention to the Taleworld.

Like rhythm, repetition features frequently and pairs with image to serve as an involvement strategy, a memory aid, and a signal of importance. In *Tatterhood*, for instance, Morden pairs the introduction of the first Taleworld images with the repetition of initial sounds:

60. Once upon a time there was a perfect palace.
61. Everything was perfect except...
62. except the *king* had gotten himself *killed* in some futile war.

Morden's choice of first Taleworld idea unit is, "There was a perfect palace." The phonological repetition in "perfect palace" eases the transition into the Taleworld, continuing in line 62 with "king" and "killed." The crisp "p" and harsh "k" sounds in these lines suit the tone, and the repeating sounds emphasize the image, letting the audience know where to turn their attention. Line 61 repeats "perfect," further directing the audience's focus. In this tale about perfection and imperfection, and following a preface about "mistakes," he begins by introducing the theme in the story's very first line. This signals the significance for the audience, and the repetition underscores the relevance.

Murphy, too, pairs repetition with imagery, as in the beginning of *Meat of the Tongue*:

- 60. So,
- 61. once, a long long long time ago
- 62. in a country far far away from here
- 63. fa:r to the east,
- 64. where it is hot,
- 65. and where it smells of,
- 66. of cinnamon,
- 67. and chocolate,
- 68. and almonds..
- 69. there was a king.

With repetition of words and clause structures, she builds propulsion in this beginning sentence and drives it toward its key image. She begins with a series of subordinate clauses, saving the subject of the sentence—as well as the subject of the story—for the very end. In the interim, she uses repetition and listing rhythms to build propulsion. "Long long long" is mirrored by "far far . . . far." The subordinate relative clause structure "where it . . ." doubles over lines 64 and 65. Lines 66-68 then draw the audience toward the Taleworld setting with evocative sensory details, lulling them with a listing, polysyndeton quality. A near copy of the list from the beginning of *The Sound of Money*, this is also a diachronic repetition, used as shorthand to evoke a setting. Finally, this list gives way to the single image of the king. By leaving the sentence open until it

resolves, at last, into its subject, she creates a light tension that, combined with the lull of the repetition and listing and rhythms, draws her audience into the Taleworld. They follow expectantly, waiting for both syntax and image to resolve and answer the question of what is coming.

She then continues emphasizing this subject with further repetition:

- 69. there was a king.
- 70. And this king was a big,
- 71. strong,
- 72. beautiful man.
- ...
- 75. He was a very powerful king.
- 76. And this king,
- 77. he had a, he had a very big army.
- 78. And what he enjoyed doing mostly,
- 79. as king,
- 80. was..was really living in that power.

Rather than retreating into the pronoun “he,” she opts to name him “king” five times in the first ten lines. This repetition facilitates the flow of idea units by carrying the subject over from one line to the next. As Tannen (2007) notes, repetition “shows how new utterances are linked to earlier discourse” (60). More importantly, however, the repetition signals importance to the audience. As Tannen (2007) explains, “repetition is evaluative” (p. 60). It “evidences a speaker’s attitude” concerning what elements are important “to the meaning of the discourse” (*id.*). Here, the emphasis falls on the key character, grounding the audience by providing a point of focus.

Beginning Call-and-Response

In a way similar to the opening call-and-response tactic, Murphy employs a Telling-world call-and response pattern in *Monkey Heart* that invites the audience to supply a voice track for certain Taleworld details. This call-and-response, itself a synchronic repetition, is accompanied by other thickly stacked involvement strategies:

214. A long long long long time ago in India,
215. one day
216. under the hot,
217. hot
218. sun
219. (hissing)
220. there was a bi:g, lo:ng, wi:de river
221. (shhhh)
222. and by the side of the river people washed their clothes and washed their babies,
223. and as they washed their clothes and babies they sighed
224. (sighs)
225. and in that great big river there lived a big,
226. fat,
227. green,
228. crocodile.

Murphy navigates this call-and-response seamlessly, without once breaking the Telling-world by addressing the audience directly. She does not gesture or directly ask the audience to make the sounds. At the same time, they never miss a beat. This might be because they are well trained after the preface. In addition, though, she uses involvement strategies such as rhythm and repetition to cue the audience indirectly. Each time, she pitches the call-and-response to the audience slowly, leading up to each instance with repetition. The first one is cued by “hot, hot sun.” The second is announced by “bi:g, lo:ng, wi:de river,” a pattern of triple adjectives that she later repeats in 224-226 with “big, fat, green.” She stretches the vowel of each word, giving the audience time to anticipate her move. The direct repetition of the image and much of the language across 221-222 cues the final audience response. In this section, repetition thus becomes a way of pacing the telling at a rate that the audience can follow, emphasizing a moment in order to signal a cue, and giving the audience time to catch their cues to participate in the Telling-world.

Directly following this sequence, Clare repeats this call-and-response again:

229. And he got up one day,
230. and the sun was beating down,

231. (hiss)
232. river was flowing,
233. (shhhh)
234. people were sighing,
235. (sighs)
236. and the crocodile got into the river and he started to swim..
237. down the river.

This call-and-response appears twice more in the story, but it is largely spaced out, with more than 100 lines between occurrences. Here, it happens twice in the beginning lines. This clustering helps to draw the audience in, and the repetition and their own participation helps to ground them. Additionally, it is also a way for Murphy to gauge their attention and engagement. Each of their participatory lines signals to her that they are staying present with the story. This effect heightens when the cues come faster and without repetition in lines 230-234, challenging the audience to keep up. From their seamless response, she may gauge that they are following. With this strategy, she has successfully drawn their attention into the Taleworld.

Toward the Narrative Present

At the beginning of each story, as settings and characters are being introduced, there is generally a funneling temporal organization that eases the shift into the Taleworld. Polanyi (1989) explains that “time in narratives funnels towards the NOW of the narrative genre,” towards the time of the story events (p. 19). Generally, this calls “for universally true propositions to occur early in a telling, followed by more restricted state propositions, followed by a section of event clauses and states restricted to intervals of time in the narrative world” (p. 19). The “universally true propositions” and slightly “more restricted state propositions” generally make up what Labov and Waletzky (1967) and Young (1987) call the “orientation” section. This is often marked by verbs in an imperfect past tense, with a progressive or repeated aspect. Following this, the narration shifts into time-restricted event clauses, marked by a shift

into the simple past tense. This introduction section is the last part of the bridge into the Taleworld. Because it is a key transition, like openings and beginnings, it is stacked with involvement strategies.

Orientation Involvement Strategies

The beginning of *The Gypsy and the Devil* demonstrates this pattern. With its extensive orientation section, it is an ideal example. The entire section is repetitive and rhythmic:

- 57. there was a very... lonely... gypsy.
- 58. Now this gypsy had long since left his people,
- 59. and he wandered by himself
- 60. and gypsies were untouchables in those days,
- 61. nobody spoke to them,
- 62. nobody looked at them.
- 63. And without any of his family, and any of his friends,
- 64. this gypsy had only one thing keeping him company,
- ...

Whenever Murphy is shifting sections, drawing focus, or otherwise transitioning, she tends to layer the lines with heavy word repetition. This is particularly true of her orientation sections. Often, she repeats the first word of a line, as in 61-62. This rhythmic doubling pattern, “nobody spoke to them, nobody looked at them,” repeats in 63—“without any of his family, and any of his friends.” Another common repetition pattern she exhibits is to repeat one of last words in a clause as one of the first words of the next, as in lines 57-58. This helps the flow of the “idea units,” offering the audience a continuous chain of images. She also often repeats the subject of a sentence, as she does here. “Gypsy” or “gypsies” serves as the subject of every clause except for 61-62. Rather than opting for the pronoun “he” after the initial character naming, Murphy names him “gypsy” three times in the opening ten lines. This repetition serves to involve the audience, to deepen the image, and to aid audience memory.

At the end of this segment, she slows for a key story image:

- 65. and that
- 66. was his fiddle,

Her slowing rhythm signals to the audience that this is something important to remember. The repetition in the lines leading up to it, as well as the way the sentence is structured to withhold the word “fiddle” until the end, draws audience attention before delivering the key story detail, ensuring it is not missed.

Continuing the orientation, lines 89-92 and 95 exhibit similar repetition:

- 89. He would wait until he knew the tavern would be closing and then he would set up,
- 90. he would pull out his little hat.
- 91. He would take out the fiddle,
- 92. He’d unwrap it and warm it up.
- 93. And when the people finally would push against the door so much and the bell would go for last orders,
- 94. and they would pour out onto the street,
- 95. he would start to play.

“He would” or “he’d” begins five lines including the first four, and appears six times. This repetition bounds this small episode, establishing a pattern of repetition in lines 89-91, and then bringing it back to conclude in line 95. Tannen (2007) notes that such bounding is a common function of repetition: “Episodes within a larger conversation are often bounded by repetitions at the beginning, which operate as a kind of theme-setting, and at the end, forming a kind of coda” (p. 77). Bounding it in this way helps to maintain focus by dividing the extensive orientation into smaller, more digestible episodes. It also helps to draw focus to the last detail or event in the sequence—in this instance, how the gypsy would begin to play. Young (1987) explains that “repetition appears to create a closural effect both by creating a sense of saturation with the pattern repeated, and by laying an evaluative emphasis on the element to be taken as the end” of the segment (p. 34).

Murphy begins another episode with a similar pattern, signaling a new segment with

“And”:

96. And he would pull that bow against the strings with such
97. magnificent
98. mastery,
99. that everybody would just stop.
100. And despite themselves, because he was a gypsy,
101. he was an untouchable, they would find themselves. . .
102. doin’ a little dance.
103. Moving with that music,
104. even if they hadn’t danced in years.
105. They would find themselves...
106. looking across the crowd of people,
107. and making eyes at somebody,
108. even if they hadn’t flirted in years.
109. And the gypsy would play and play and play and play,
110. and finally when the last note sung and hung in the air,
111. he would stop.

The heavy repetition continues through this segment. Lines 97 and 98 repeat the initial sound, and she slows, punctuating each word, so that each is its own idea unit. The gypsy’s great skill becomes the third idea that she emphasizes in this way, following “very...lonely...gypsy” and “and that / was his fiddle.” Almost like a jazz musician, she mostly hits a flurry of grace notes, but punctuates the notes of the main melody with extra emphasis so that the overall arc is unmistakable. In this way, as Polanyi describes (1989), tellers delineate the core plot or “adequate paraphrase” through patterns of evaluation (p. 26). So far, even if the audience has missed the grace notes, they have likely caught that a very lonely gypsy has, for his only friend, a violin, with which he is very skilled.

The images that follow underscore this note with additional repetition. The first and the last image bound this section with their symmetry. The first few lines describe the gypsy playing, and everyone stopping to listen. The last lines repeat this image—playing, and then stopping—bounding the segment. Within the segment, there is further repetition. “They would find

themselves” begins the two middle image descriptions in this section, paired with the repetition of “even if they hadn’t” in lines 104 and 108. This section also repeats structurally, with two gerunds following “They would find themselves” and preceding “even if they hadn’t.” At the end of the sequence, “Play and play and play and play” boosts the momentum, as does the repetition of sounds in “sung and hung,” until in line 111 she arrests this momentum with a sudden stop, reinforced, even, by the word “stop.”

This heavy layering of repetition and rhythm helps to draw audience attention to key story details and to keep attention through an extensive orientation section. Additionally, it helps to ease the learning curve of the orientation section by slowing the discourse. As Tannen (2007) explains, “Repetition and variations facilitate comprehension by providing semantically less dense discourse” (p. 59). If some of the words in an idea unit are repeated, “comparatively less new information is communicated than if all words uttered carried new information” (*id.*). Thus repetition allows the teller to communicate new information at roughly the same rate as the audience is able to absorb it.

Continuing the orientation, she employs this same sort of repetition as she introduces the story’s other main character:

123. And there was somebody who admired the gypsy.
124. There was somebody who lived
125. below the river that the gypsy sat beside.
126. Below the layers of earth,
127. down,
128. deep in the dark...
129. hot...
130. underworld.
131. There was someone down there who liked to keep a fashionable set of horns on his head,
132. and a tail,
133. and he looked up at that gypsy,
134. he loved how that gypsy played.

“There was somebody who” repeats at the beginning of the first two clauses of this sequence. This repetition also bounds this sequence, beginning the last sentence with the slightly modified “There was someone down there who...” Connecting the middle of this sequence and underscoring the image is another slew of repetitions—“below,” “below,” in lines 125 and 126 is followed by “down, deep in the dark.” The alliteration contributes to both sound and sense, as the heavy, thudding sound gives the idea of weight and depth, while the repetition and rhythm involves the audience’s ear. “Down” appears again in 131, preceding the introduction of the image of the Devil. The repeated “d” sounds might also serve to obliquely suggest the “Devil,” who is conspicuously not named outright. She emphasizes this character image with a sentence structure that withholds the resolution for a few lines, creating a misty image that finally resolves into the Devil. Additional repetition follows this character introduction, with the structural and alliterative repetition of “he looked / he loved” and the direct repetition of “that gypsy,” “that gypsy.” This reinforces what the Devil is focusing on, panning the camera and providing a transition to the next sequence, and connecting the dots for the audience.

Following this segment, Murphy again transitions between sequences with a near repetition, with “He” + verb + “gypsy” as object:

- 133. and he looked up at that gypsy,
- 134. he loved how that gypsy played.
- 135. And he watched the gypsy for many years.
- 136. And I don’t think this happens to you here...
- 137. in Utah.
- 138. But when you’re not...
- 139. talked to,
- 140. when you’re not seen,
- 141. when you don’t have friendship,
- 142. or conversation, or even recognition on the street,
- ...
- 145. And the loneliness that crawled inside his heart,
- 146. and his bones,
- 147. it turned into melancholy.

148. And the melancholy was making its way down into a deep depression as he sat by
his river one night,
149. with his bread, and his cheese,
150. and the devil looked up,
151. and the devil saw the depression,
152. and he saw opportunity.

Repetition again moves the sequence along. The triple “when you’re not,” “when you’re not,” “when you don’t” defines the first half. The second half centers around the repetition of “melancholy” and “depression.” The first clause ends, and the second begins, with “melancholy” in a place of prominence. “Down into a deep depression” brings back the repeated “d” sounds that were featured in the previous sequence, in the context of the Devil. The repeated “his” and the listing quality in 149 gives a sense of habit—river, bread, and cheese evoke more than is included in their sequence, evoking the entirety of the gypsy’s routine. “And the devil . . .” “and the devil . . .” “and he . . .” finishes the section. The Devil’s watching, beginning in line 135 and repeating in lines 150-152, bounds this sequence. The last sequence in this orientation section, it is marked throughout by thickly layered rhythm and repetition that helps to draw audience attention to important content and to involve them in the Taleworld.

With a much shorter orientation section, *Meat of the Tongue* provides a more compact example of the same patterns, allowing a snapshot view:

79. He would take his armies,
80. and he would go out,
81. and he would conquer other kingdoms.
82. And then when he was done he would come back.
83. To his throne.
84. To his palace.
85. But the more he traveled,
86. the more he conquered other kingdoms,
87. the more he saw that
88. every other king had one thing he didn’t have.
89. Every other king
90. had a queen.

These lines exhibit the same repetition and parallel structure she often employs. The segment begins with four lines repeating “he would.” As she often does, Murphy opts not to list these items—“He would take his armies, go out, conquer other kingdoms, and come back”—but rather to list them singly, preserving the repetition of the structure. This is followed by the parallel lines, “To his throne. / To his palace.” In addition to the repetition of sentence structure, throne/palace also repeats the idea metonymically. This is followed in lines 85-87 by a triplet: “the more . . . the more . . . the more . . .” This sets up the final parallel, “every other king had . . .” These repetitions all build up to the final line of this segment, and to its key story detail—the queen. With these constant repetitions, Murphy ensures that the audience follows her through the orientation section and absorbs the most important points, most particularly the last item in the sequence.

Funneling into the Narrative Now

The last major shift in the beginning of a telling is the shift into the narrative “now.” The initial lines, as Polanyi (1989) describes, generally set the scene with “universally true propositions” and background. This funnels through more time-restricted clauses, transitioning eventually into the narrative “now,” into events transpiring in the narrative present, told in the simple past. This funneling, moving audience attention from the general to the specific and from the background Taleworld past to the unfolding Taleworld present, provides the audience with a gentle slide into the Taleworld.

With its brief orientation, Morden’s *Tatterhood* provides in only a few lines an ideal example of how this funneling pattern unfolds:

- 60. Once upon a time there was a perfect palace.
- 61. Everything was perfect except . . .
- 62. except the king had gotten himself killed in some futile war.

Morden begins with the universal proposition of the existence of the palace. A more restricted state proposition follows in 61, as the progressive aspect of the verb in “Everything was perfect” reveals the general state of events, and the audience gets the impression that this has been happening for some time. The repetition of “except . . . except” here is interesting, because it does not sound like a Telling-world feature; it is not a stutter, as if the teller is reaching for the next words. Instead, it feels like a Taleworld feature, which places the audience behind a character viewpoint. The evaluative “futile” adds to this effect. It becomes clear that it is not Morden’s voice and opinions the audience is hearing, but the voice and opinions of one of the characters, who is reflecting on what makes life less than perfect. As he funnels audience attention into the narrative “now,” he also funnels their attention into a specific viewpoint, like a camera zooming in.

In line 63, the audience learns who this is:

- 63. And the queen had no children.
- 64. She felt their absence more and more.
- 65. Whenever she saw a mother with her daughter,
- 66. it was as though a dagger had been thrust into the queen’s belly.

Here, some partially time-restricted clauses continue, told in the imperfect past. Time markers such as “more and more” and “whenever” in lines 64-65 underscore the progressive and repeated aspect of the verbs.

Finally, event clauses begin in line 67, switching into the simple past tense, cuing the audience that consequential events in the Taleworld are going to start moving. As he accomplishes this transition from the Taleworld orientation into the deepest attention level of the narrative “now,” he cushions the shift with a repeating structure and anaphora:

- 67. One night she could stand it no longer. She took off her crown,
- 68. she took off her fine clothes, she dressed herself instead as a commoner.

This temporal funneling structure, narrowing ultimately to the first temporally bounded event of the story, and cushioned by involvement strategies, is another way that Morden smooths the transition between frames.

Murphy's transition in *The Gypsy and the Devil* is similar. In line 153, she transitions from a general description of the gypsy's day-to-day life to immediate, unfolding action.

148. And the melancholy was making its way down into a deep depression as he sat by
his river one night,
149. with his bread, and his cheese,
150. and the devil looked up,
151. and the devil saw the depression,
152. and he saw opportunity.
153. And so he took himself,
154. and when the gypsy stood up...
155. he noticed that there was a tall, handsome man
156. in a green velvet cloak.

In 148, the verb still has a repeated/progressive aspect, an imperfect "was making." The transition to the simple past happens in this line, with "as he sat by the river one night." "He sat" carries a simple past aspect. "One night" adds a time marker, in case the aspect of the verb is ambiguous. The verbs in 150-152 follow suit, and the next few lines move into the main action of the story. With that, the audience has been transported into the main action, with all needed background knowledge filled. The frequent repetition in this segment both smooths this transition and drives focus toward it, ensuring there is enough momentum to make the jump into the narrative "now." In this way Murphy shifts the audience's attention from the general to the specific, from the background events to the immediately unfolding story, providing them with a smooth transition into the Taleworld.

Summary

"The boundaries of stories provide junctures for the insertion of information about ontological differences in the form of frames" (Young, 1987, p. 45). As a teller transitions from

the Realm of Conversation to the Telling-world, from the Telling-world to the Taleworld, and back again, they negotiate differences between these realms through framing, creating for the audience an angle of entry into each new mode of presentation. In this way, frames accomplish what Young calls “edgework” for stories (*id.*). To help smooth the boundaries between realms, tellers artfully employ involvement strategies, clustering them around moments of transition. Through repetition, rhythm, detail, and other such involvement strategies, tellers guide audience attention through boundary shifts, funneling attention to the narrative “now.”

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS: PART III, INTERNAL FRAME SHIFTS

Once a teller induces Taleworld attention, it is not a simple matter of maintaining it until the end of the story. On the contrary—the Taleworld frame is not a single unbroken continuity throughout a tale, but rather exists in a dynamic relationship with all the other realms in play. Throughout a telling, it is constantly breaking, giving way to the Telling-world, the Conversation or Event Realm, or the realm of ordinary reality. Consequently, audience attention constantly shifts between realms, in ways both intended and unintended by the teller. This section examines these frame breaks, both intended and unintended, and how storytellers navigate the resultant realm shifts.

I define as a frame “break” anything that disrupts the audience’s focus on internally generated imagery and Taleworld events. Such breaks may be intentional or unintentional. Frames break unintentionally, for instance, when distractions arise from the audience, or when the teller experiences technical difficulties or makes a mistake. In the majority of instances, though, tellers actually break frames *intentionally*. They draw attention to an aspect of the telling, they allude to other Taleworlds, they directly address the audience, or they make connections between the story and the external world. Each time they do so, they disrupt audience attention to the Taleworld.

In these samples, though, I found that, intentional or not, these “breaks” do not necessarily mean that the telling is broken. Quite to the contrary, in fact. Frame breaks lend power to a performance, and it might even be said that such breaks are vital to meaningful storytelling. Though a break may momentarily suspend the Taleworld spell, each one provides an opportunity to create moments of what I will call “inter-realm resonance.” In essence, inter-realm resonance is the effect when an element is transposed from one realm into another, so that

it is simultaneously meaningful in both places. As the bridge between the story and the audience's experience, this resonance is key to both relevance, or "tellability," and to sense-making.

This inter-realm resonance can be created by frame breaks. Breaks, as points of exit from the Taleworld, can become points of *entry* to *other* realms, and especially to the Realm of Conversation. When such a bridge is made, the audience, suddenly standing between two realms, has the vantage of a new angle of interpretation for *both*. Meaning flows across the connection bi-directionally, so that both the Taleworld and the realm it connects to are suffused. In this way, Young (1987) explains, storytelling "plays on, out, and through the continuities between realms, particularly between contiguous realms like the story and the conversation" (p. 14).

Such connections are vital for two interconnected reasons. First, by connecting story events to something else in the audience's shared experience, they ground the story's relevance, making the story "tellable." Stories, as Young (1987) notes, "are not just tellable, but tellable on occasions," and "it is their relevance to this occasion which is the point of the telling" (p. 55). As was discussed in Chapter Three, performance storytellers bear the extra burden of providing their own context and occasion for the telling. Any connection to another realm—particularly the Realm of Conversation—helps to establish this "occasion" and to give the story contextual relevance. It is thus these bridges, joining the Taleworld meaningfully with the occasion, that make the story "tellable."

The second, related purpose of these connections is to enable meaning and sense-making. The point of a narrative, observes Polanyi (1989), emerges from a story's relevance to the shared world of the teller and listener (p. 16). Meaning, then, cannot be transmitted without inter-realm connections. As Young (1987) explains, narrative sequence can only provide plot, while it is

“frames” that “provide meaning” (p. 219). “Sense,” she says, is always “a relation between two levels,” and can never be the province of one level alone (*id.*). To make meaningful sense of a story, then, the audience must be able to see how Taleworld events connect to other levels or realms. Inter-realm resonance provides this perspective, making frame breaks an essential tool.

Unintended Frame Breaks

Sometimes, despite the intentions of a storyteller, distractions arise and disrupt the audience’s attention to the Taleworld. Babies cry, trains pass, rain begins to fall, or the teller makes a noticeable mistake. A teller may choose to ignore these breaks, and try to re-establish the frame by pressing on and focusing on the Taleworld. Often, however, a teller chooses instead to *incorporate* these breaks, in a move I will call “transposition.”¹¹ By somehow weaving the distraction into the story, they “transpose” an element from another realm into the Taleworld. This provides the audience with a sort of closed circuit that both conducts their attention back to the story and charges the telling with additional energy and relevance.

Most often, unintended frame breaks come in the form of Event Realm distractions. Microphone and sound issues, for example, are Event Realm constraints on the telling that often cause difficulties for tellers. In one such instance, only a few lines into *Tatterhood*, Morden begins experiencing technical difficulties:

¹¹ I have borrowed the word from Young (1987), who uses it to refer to a processing of “[spanning] discrete spheres of reality” by “integrating” one reality “linguistically within the order of” another, as when someone interprets a dream, transposing the “reality of the dream into the reality of everyday life” (p. 11). She notes that “enclaves produced by such transposition belong, in a sense, to both spheres of reality,” explaining that they are “located in one reality, but refer to another” (*id.*). Young thus uses the term to refer to transposing entire enclaves, rather than elements within them. Though my use of the term is therefore slightly different, I find the parallel useful, as it shares with Young’s term the basic concept of “spanning discrete spheres of reality” through linguistic integration.

6. Don't stray from the path,
7. don't open that box.
8. Without them, there'd be—forget it. *Morden switches microphones*
9. (Laughter and applause)

In these first lines, he begins to build a frame and to invite the audience's attention. Throughout the first several lines of his soliloquy, however, his microphone crackles. Finally, mid-line, Morden acknowledges that the malfunctioning microphone is distracting to himself and probably to the audience as well. In doing so, he discloses to the audience an awareness of a hiccup in the Event Realm, breaking the Realm-of-Conversation focus that he had been trying to build.

That the audience notices the friction between realms is evidenced by their laughter. Initially, through the microphone's distortions, Morden had tried to begin the shift of attention toward the Realm of Conversation, endeavoring to make the Event Realm disappear. When he breaks from this, his sudden re-acknowledgment of the Event Realm delightfully jostles the audience's expectations. Morden's interruption allows them to acknowledge the distraction as well, rather than politely and strenuously ignoring it. When Morden shatters that pretense, signaling to the audience that he sides with them against whatever rules might demand it, their relief sparks laughter.

Morden thus addresses the conflict in the minds of the audience, but in doing so, breaks the frame he had begun to build. To repair the damage, he then *transposes* the distraction. He incorporates the Event Realm interruption into the frame, linking it thematically:

10. Without them...
11. (Laughter)
12. The mistakes, I mean,
13. like this one...
13. there'd be no stories.

With this move, what was a distraction becomes a reinforcement of the theme. Moreover, this acknowledgment of the distraction and its subsequent abduction into the frame signals to the

audience that they may forget about technical issues—mistakes and imperfections are an acceptable part of the pattern. In doing so, it also redirects their attention back to the Realm of Conversation. Thus by transposing this rogue element, Morden nullifies a distraction, enriches the theme of the discourse with inter-realm resonance, and provides a convenient transition back into the Realm of Conversation.

In a similar instance, Murphy has just begun orienting the audience to the Taleworld when, following microphone issues in the preface, a sound technician sneaks onstage to adjust the wires of her microphone, fastened around her back. Without missing a beat, Murphy transposes the distraction directly into the Taleworld:

64. this gypsy had only one thing keeping him company,
65. and that
66. was his fiddle,
67. which he kept carefully wrapped in a cloth under his cloak...
68. and whenever he needed to speak louder, a sound man would magically appear...
69. (Laughter)
70. ...would adjust his lower back, and the gypsy would continue to talk and be heard by everybody.
71. (Laughter and cheering)
72. Now this fiddle was his only company,
- ...

She incorporates the sound technician into the Taleworld imagery, creating a delightful friction between realms. Even as the audience sees the technician adjust Murphy's microphone, they also mentally picture him adjusting the gypsy. The interesting interpenetration of these elements thus creates a ripple of resonance between worlds, connecting the audience's current Event Realm experience to the Taleworld, thereby enriching both.

Additionally, as with the *Tatterhood* example, the transposition provides a clean Taleworld break by giving the audience permission to acknowledge the distraction. The very acknowledgement then allows the audience to let it go. Their relief becomes laughter, and they

even cheer, as if to both thank the teller for this relief and to congratulate her for her clever execution. Having thus successfully dissolved the distraction, Murphy signals with “Now” that she is preparing to shift back into the Taleworld orientation, and with that is able to transition smoothly back into narrative discourse.

One instructive episode involves a small Event Realm disturbance that spirals into a series of distractions, claiming several minutes of stage time. It begins in *King of the Herrings* lines 241-242, and it could not have come at a more inopportune moment:

- 238. Jack...had thought the feather perfect?
- 239. (Laughter)
- 240. She...she was perfect.
- 241. (Baby cries in the audience)
- 242. Somewhere a baby cried...
- 243. (Laughter)

At this point, Morden has been building toward this image at break-neck pace. When he arrives at the image of the sleeping princess, he suddenly halts the pace, dwelling lovingly on the image, wrapping the audience in long silences. Just when he has carefully drawn the audience into one of this story’s deepest Taleworld points, just when he pauses dramatically, a baby somewhere in the audience cries into the silence. The tenuous Taleworld trance shatters.

Rather than ignoring the distraction, Morden chooses to transpose the frame-breaker into the frame. He does so with humor—the baby is obviously not meant to be significant to the plot. The audience laughs at this, and at the friction that the transposition creates between frames. Morden then takes the opportunity to let the audience up for air, continuing to joke about the baby. He will have to work his way back into the story eventually, but he meanders a bit, ensuring that the audience has time to get over the distraction:

- 242. Somewhere a baby cried...
- 243. (Laughter)
- 244. Don’t worry, baby...

245. (Laughter)
246. I'm not doing *any more singing*.
247. (Laughter)
248. Nothing to worry—I did my singing yesterday.
249. No more singing, baby.
250. You can relax.
251. (Laughter)

His self-deprecating joke is a diachronic repetition, referring to an earlier performance. For audience members who were present to hear Morden sing, it invokes an inside joke. By referencing another Telling-world occasion, it also brings audience attention from the Event Realm—where the baby is a constraint—back to the Telling-world, from which he can transition back to the Taleworld.

Unfortunately, when he aims to launch back into the story and re-establish the Taleworld frame, a slip of the tongue multiplies the problem:

252. The moment he saw the baby.
253. The princess.
254. (Laughter)
255. The *moment* he saw the princess—
256. (Laughter)

The baby is accidentally inserted into the Taleworld. For a moment, the audience receives an idea unit with a strange and unexpected bit of imagery—suddenly in the bed is not a princess, but a baby. They laugh at the Telling-world slip, and at the friction caused by the appearance of the Event Realm element in the Taleworld imagery. Now, rather than the Taleworld successfully abducting the distraction, the distraction threatens to take over the Taleworld.

Morden tries to recover quickly, in line 253. When the audience laughs, he tries again in 255, repeating the correct line. But when the audience laughs again in 256, obviously still distracted, it is clear the frame has broken clean through. Rather than continuing to try to force it

back together, he decides to venture out into the Realm of Conversation to fetch the audience back into the Taleworld:

- 257. I have this,
- 258. I have this thing about babies, you know.
- 259. It's, it's the same,
- 260. sometimes people ask me to tell stories at weddings,
- 261. I can't!
- 262. I just cry!
- 263. (Laughter)
- 264. It's the same with babies!
- 265. It's,
- 266. I just blub up! I see a baby, I bl—,
- 267. anyway.

As he prepares to transition, he gives the audience time to settle, so that he does not leave listeners behind. Having made this aside, he then drops the word “anyway” as a signal that he intends to shift frames.

He follows this, though, with one further continuation of the aside:

- 268. It's 'cause I'm British. You see, it's all this repressed emotion.
- 269. (Laughter)

This, too, is a diachronic repetition, an allusion to his earlier telling of *The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew*, in which he jokes about his British-ness. The audience greets the inside joke with laughter. This Telling-world link to another performance thus builds rapport even as it helps to pull the distraction back toward the Taleworld.

Following this, he tries, again, to re-establish the Taleworld frame, again signaling with “Anyway”:

- 270. Anyway,
- 271. the *moment*...
- 272. (Laughter)

He pauses here, perhaps so that he can make sure that he does not repeat his error, but also so that he can gauge the audience's readiness to return. In this pause, they laugh. This response

suggests that the audience is not ready to move back into the Taleworld just yet—they are still remembering the baby and chuckling about the slip.

Morden acknowledges this and collects the scattered threads of the audience's focus by leaving the line open for a call-and-response, asking the audience to fill in the final word:

- 271. the *moment*...
- 272. (Laughter)
- 273. Jack saw the—
- 274. (“Princess!”)

“Princess.” *Not* baby.

Rather than trying, yet again, to regain focus by supplying the word and the image himself, he invites the audience to do it. After the story has been so thoroughly derailed, Morden needs a new ticket in order to continue. This call-and-response gives the audience the opportunity to give him this ticket, and to jointly agree to move on. Filling in the word, the audience signals that they are at last ready to continue, to re-enter the imaginal Taleworld and to leave the Event Realm baby distraction behind.

Morden completes the return gently, giving the audience the time they need.

- 275. *Thank* you for that.
- 276. (Laughter)
- 277. It all could have gone horribly wrong.

He lingers outside narrative discourse a while longer, making the transition gradual and giving time for the Taleworld imagery to cement in the audience's minds—princess, not baby. He comments on the audience's participation in the Telling-world (“Princess”), creating humorous friction between the Telling-world and the Taleworld by suggesting that their assistance in the Telling-world actually affects this Taleworld's events. The joke illuminates frame dynamics in an interesting way, playing with the Telling-world/Taleworld relationship. The Taleworld depends upon the Telling-world for its manifestation; it is as it is painted by the words the teller

employs. Morden playfully pokes at this realm juncture, joking as if a Telling-world slip-of-the-tongue could actually hijack events in the Taleworld permanently. The audience laughs at this friction, and at the hint of self-deprecation behind it. This helps them to achieve catharsis as far as the distraction is concerned. The counterfactual conditional—“could have gone”—with its past-tense implication, adds to this effect, suggesting that the problem is now passed. Finally, the reference to the Taleworld—the “it” referred to in line 277—also helps to restore the audience’s attention to it.

Following this, he tries to finally re-assert the Taleworld imagery. Initially, he begins a little too far from the point of departure:

277. It all could have gone horribly wrong.
278. (Laughter)
279. And there,
280. on the pillow...

Sensing this, he rewinds, providing the necessary background in a quick pace that suggests summary:

281. the moment he saw the princess, he fell in love with her.

He then finishes the transition back into the Taleworld:

282. And there, on the pillow...one hair.
283. ...
284. “I’ll never see her again.
285. I’ll *never see her again!*”

The pause in 281 cements this transition, both gauging and deepening Taleworld engagement. The audience stays with him through the pause without murmurs or laughter, suggesting that their focus has returned. The silence also deepens Taleworld engagement. As Tannen (2007) notes, silence can serve as an engagement strategy by “requiring the listener . . . to fill in unstated meaning,” contributing to a “sense of involvement through mutual participation in sensemaking”

(37). Morden's brief silence invites the audience's focus, inviting them to imagine Jack's thought processes, and allows them time to become accustomed to being back in the Taleworld. To finalize the effect, he repeats line 284 word-for-word, an involvement strategy that deepens engagement, smoothing the boundary transition.

With that, the story continues, and the audience moves on, forgetting the baby episode. Forgetting it, that is, until Morden brings the image back. This time, Morden transposes the distraction, turning his Telling-world mistake into *Jack's* Taleworld mistake:

500. "Jack, do you love me?"

501. "I have loved you ever since I saw you sleeping in your bed.

502. I have loved you since the moment I first saw you and mistook you for a baby."

503. (Laughter!!!)

504. (Applause)

The laughter and applause following this remark are uproarious. In this moment, there is a frame splice that sets off sparks, as Morden reifies in Taleworld dialogue a mistake that happened in Telling-world narration. This repetition also invokes what is now an inside joke, and the sparks of the resulting rapport add to the friction of the frame splice until the whole thing blazes warmly. In this way Morden weaves the element through every frame, so that at the end of the telling, what was a distraction has become a rich source of inter-realm resonance, linking the audience's Event Realm experience to the Taleworld.

Frame Bridges

While some frame breaks are unintended, the result of Event Realm constraints and distractions, the majority are fully intentional. Through linking the Taleworld to other realms, storytellers establish a story's contextual relevance and suggest frames of interpretation for meaning and sense-making. Meaning is always an inter-realm affair—as Roland Barthes (1975) explains, "distributional relations," or relations belonging to the same level or realm, are alone

“unable to account for meaning” (p. 242). The possible meaning or import of the Taleworld’s events are not visible from within the frame; they are visible “only to the reflective glance” (Young, 1987, p. 4). The audience, then, cannot make sense of a story if their Taleworld engagement is wholly uninterrupted, because “interplay between engagement and detached awareness is how we come to understandings” (4). Intentional frame breaks serve to create this interplay, producing reflective distance and suggesting possible frames of interpretation.¹²

Links to Realms Outside the Enclave

Sometimes, a teller disrupts the Taleworld frame by making references that connect the Taleworld to the external world, rather than to another realm in the enclave. For instance, in *The Gypsy and the Devil*, Murphy uses real-world cultural references as a design principle, shaping her unique version of the story around the Devil’s performances for audiences of three different audience-suggested cities. As Murphy characterizes—and gently satirizes—each location, she creates a humorous interplay between the Taleworld and the realm of ordinary reality. Throughout the middle of the story, she navigates these multiple breaks, constantly walking the edge of the Taleworld.

Initially, she keeps the break light, using repetition to invite the audience to participate without actually breaking from the narration:

217. he needed to pick a city,

¹² It should perhaps be noted here that obvious frame breaks are not the only method of prompting reflection and creating inter-realm resonance. There are subtle, metaphorical ways to elicit such resonance, such as with images and events that might carry strong psychological or spiritual associations. While such elements are common and vital sources of inter-realm resonance, they are much more difficult to pinpoint, due to their subjective nature. For this reason, the full realm of possibilities is beyond the scope of this paper, and I will focus here only on places where the teller noticeably breaks frame through an intentional shift in the level of discourse.

218. where he could find people in a tavern,
219. needed to pick any city in Europe...
220. (Audience yells out names of cities.)
221. Dublin, why not. Start with the Irish.
222. So!
223. (Laughter)

Continuing this light touch, she follows with a line that ambiguously straddles realms—the thought expressed in line 221 may be Taleworld narration, belonging to the Devil, or it might be Telling-world commentary, belonging to Murphy. In this way, she straddles boundaries while maintaining Taleworld involvement.

The anticipatory laughter in 223 makes it clear that the audience is awake in more than one realm. It highlights the irony of the request for “Dublin,” given Murphy’s Irish background. In this moment, the audience is conscious of the Telling-world, as they wonder how Murphy will treat her compatriots. With self-deprecating humor, she acknowledges this, addressing the audience directly:

224. There he was on the cobblestone streets of Temple Bar and you could hear the Irish
in every single pub nearby,
225. you know what we’re like.
226. (Laughter)

With this direct address, she completes the break. She acknowledges that the audience is awake to the Telling-world, giving them permission to be so, and also to enjoy a joke at her expense.

She then sketches Dublin:

227. He could hear the music, and he could hear the dancing, and then he could hear the
fighting, and the arguing, and the philosophy, and the jokes, and all the things and
the stories that happen.
...
231. And then the doors started to heave,
232. and press,
233. and the Irish
234. *burst*
235. from the tavern.

With this sketch of a real-world culture, she creates a link between the Taleworld and the outside world. She enhances this sketch with rhythmic listing and polysyndeton, grounding the audience in the Taleworld even as she opens up awareness of the external world. The audience is now awake in the Taleworld, in the Telling-world, and in the outside world.

She repeats this pattern, characterizing London in like manner:

- 254. And he was waiting for the English, who of course
- 255. comport themselves
- 256. much more politely than the Irish.
- 257. (Laughter)
- 258. There was..
- 259. no singing.
- 260. There was no arguing,
- 261. there was just gentle discussion going on in all of their taverns.
- 262. (Laughter)
- 263. And the doors weren't heaving,
- 264. they were politely opened by somebody who worked there,
- 265. and everybody filed out.
- 266. (Laughter)
- 267. In a—in an orderly queue,
- 268. to go home.
- 269. (Laughter)

These scenes are necessarily iterative, but the way that she contrasts the cultures provides freshness and variety. She delivers these scenes with parallel structure—the Devil hears sounds from the outside, and then the doors to the taverns open, the people come out, and they react to the Devil's playing. Within this repeated structure, however, she contrasts the details. This weaving of synchronic repetition and contrast keeps potentially tiresome iterations engaging. It also allows Murphy to navigate the constant realm shifts. The repeating structure helps ground the audience in the Taleworld, giving them something that they can anticipate, even as the variance in content keeps them awake to the ordinary world, drawing on their knowledge and experience of these real-world cultures. She plays to their expectations, using diachronic repetitions of stereotypes to transpose ordinary reality into the Taleworld:

279. Ooh! The English were horrified!
280. They were horrified!
281. But they don't express emotion, so they just sort of went, "Oo!"
282. (Laughter)

The audience laughs at the recognition. These inter-realm references thus serve as an engagement strategy in their own right, delighting the audience, who enjoy making the connections. Additionally, the resonance between the Taleworld and the external world serves to ground the story and give it context within the audience's experience, establishing the story's "tellability."

In *Meat of the Tongue*, Murphy breaks frame in a similar pattern, introducing outside-world references that the audience is sure to recognize:

137. And he looked at her, her hair wasn't quite as lustrous,
138. you know, and he said, "Is, is uh, is
139. something wrong?"
140. And she said, "No.
141. Everything's *.fine.*"
142. (Laughter)

The audience laughs, though there is nothing in the dialogue alone that is humorous. Rather, it is Murphy's tone of voice that makes her "*fine*" a diachronic repetition of a recognizable cultural irony, namely, that women say they are "fine" in this manner when they most certainly are not "fine." It is this connection to the audience's everyday world that prompts laughter. This line thus operates both as Taleworld dialogue and as a sly reference to a cultural pattern from other conversations, other enclaves in ordinary reality. As a result, the audience is awake in both realms, and meaning—as well as identification with a character who is now an "Everywoman"—seeps across the boundaries.

Other links to realms outside the enclave are less extensive, consisting of only brief allusions. For instance, in *Meat of the Tongue*, Murphy transposes cultural references that briefly depart from the Taleworld frame:

- 164. But now she was...fwt...
- 165. almost like you know, like a Hollywood
- 166. star, or sum'm.
- 167. (Laughter)
- 168. Very *choked sucking sound* skinny.

She pokes fun at a cultural phenomenon in a way that invokes rapport, empowering the audience to laugh at the cultural demon of unhealthy thinness that haunts modern women. While this may not bear directly on the story's theme, it still grounds the story, lending it additional relevance by connecting it to the audience's experience.

She drops another allusion later in the same story, to a television show:

- 302. I have an idea. Uh...we're gonna swap.
- 303. I'll have your wife and you'll have mine."
- 304. It was the original Wife Swap, I believe they made a TV show about it later.
- 305. (Laughter)

This diachronic repetition serves as a joke to lighten the mood. It also perhaps serves to relieve some tension about potentially uncomfortable Taleworld events. The allusion smooths over story events that might otherwise be discordant or disturbing to the audience by providing a more familiar cultural reference point. Thus this note of inter-realm resonance provides not only contextual relevance, but also a safe and accessible framework for interpretation.

Murphy's allusions and cultural references are instances of how tellers incorporate real-world elements into the Taleworld to infuse it with additional meaning. In one interesting example from *Tatterhood*, Morden does the reverse, transposing a Taleworld element onto ordinary reality:

- 73. She looked up and here was a white-haired woman.

...

77. Now the white-haired woman was a witch. A good witch, for there are..such..things.

This remark, part orientation, part evaluation, breaks the narration momentarily to refer to other realms. Morden does not seem to mean that “there are such things” in the Taleworld; instead, when he claims “there are,” he refers ambiguously to other Taleworlds and to the external world. This ambiguity causes a sort of conflation between the two, so that the lines between the Taleworld and ordinary reality blur, and as a result, the outside world takes on a magical haze. This is an example, not of letting the outside world color the Taleworld, but of letting the Taleworld color the outside world. This kind of inter-realm resonance can endure in the audience’s perceptions even once the telling is over, lending lasting significance to the tale.

Another brief external-world reference later in the same story carries a similar effect:

459. He realized he’d never seen a woman like her in all his—

460. Nordic, blond life!

With sudden Telling-world awareness, this line connects the story to its Norwegian heritage. In doing so, it also creates an interesting Taleworld-ordinary world fusion, suggesting an alternate Scandinavia where such a thing happened and where such magic exists. Again, the lines between the ordinary world and the Taleworld are blurred, and with this inter-realm resonance, the ordinary world takes on a sort of fairytale cast.

On occasion, a teller makes references that explicitly offer a frame for story interpretation. In one example from *The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew*, Morden breaks Taleworld focus to comment on the story directly, suggesting a specific psychological lens:

517. The bee said nothing.

518. It disappeared into the pink folds of a rose.

519. I told this story once,

520. and...there was a Freudian psychoanalyst in the audience.

521. (Laughter)

522. And she said “Daniel, all your stories are so sexual.”

523. (Laughter)
524. And I said “What d’you mean?” She said,
525. “The *Leaves That Hung, But Never Grew*.”
526. (Laughter)
527. “Little bee, little bee...”

This aside serves multiple functions. First, it interrupts the pacing, letting the audience up for air during a long period of intense Taleworld immersion where the tension is high. It also serves as a graceful thematic orientation. Without being indelicate, Morden ensures that the audience does not miss associations that might bear on the meaning of the story. He gives them reflective distance, and offers them a lens for interpretation. He does so in reported speech, putting a degree of separation between the content and himself, in case his audience is sensitive. This also allows Morden to acknowledge an association that some audience members perhaps already noticed, so that it does not become a distraction.

He returns to the joke again later:

- ...
549. “you be a tree,
550. I..will be..an apple.”
551. Thank goodness it wasn’t a banana.
552. (Laughter)

Now, it is a synchronic repetition, an inside joke that suggests a relationship with the audience. At the same time, it ensures that they remain awake to possible angles of interpretation, even while they are immersed in the Taleworld. He thus uses this reference to create a sort of ongoing inter-realm resonance, giving his audience a framework for meaningful interpretation of the story’s imagery and events.

Sometimes, frame disruptions give a story additional contextual relevance by connecting the story to other Telling-worlds. For instance, in *Meat of the Tongue*, Murphy refers to two other festival tellers who preceded her on stage:

345. And when he ran out of stories,
346. he pulled out his mandolin,
347. he wasn't as good...
348. as Josh and David,
349. but
350. he played...
351. (Laughter)

The merging of two real-world performers with the Taleworld creates an interesting friction. As the two realms rub against each other, each one takes on a bit of the flavor of the other—the Taleworld gains the feel of reality, and ordinary reality takes on some of the wonder of the Taleworld. Additionally, this Event Realm connection serves to suggest a relationship with the audience, calling on their shared experience of previous performances to create rapport. Perhaps most importantly, it helps to ground the story within the overall event, lending it contextual relevance and tellability.

In other instances, frame breaks give a story additional contextual relevance through allusions to other Taleworlds. For instance, in *Tatterhood*, Morden uses such an allusion as a sort of orientation:

...
274. but Tatterhood *leapt* onto the deck of the ship,
275. and as I'm sure you know from the Wizard of Oz,
276. evil witches hate running water.
277. And so the witches pulled back,
...

He abruptly switches the direction of the lens from the Taleworld to the Realm of Conversation, breaking out of the third-person viewpoint of line 274—"Tatterhood leapt"—and switching to a direct, first-person address of the audience. The narrator becomes suddenly visible with this "I" in line 275. The audience, too, returns, addressed directly as "you." This aside occurs quickly, in a subordinate clause surrounded on either side by complete clauses. This nesting helps the interposition to be less jarring, ensuring that though the audience's attention stretches for a

moment to encompass another Taleworld, it does not break. The allusion to another Taleworld—the world of The Wizard of Oz—has the effect of making the Taleworld reality feel more expansive. When Morden suggests that the two Taleworlds share background constants, namely, that witches hate water, the imaginal reality stretches into other works wherein witches are real. Thus in addition to providing orientation, this allusion allows Morden to enrich the Taleworld with associations from another.

In another instance, Morden makes an unspecific allusion that might be described as “genre awareness.”

- 325. and *out came Ella*.
- 326. Guess what?
- 327. (Laughter)
- 328. Anything? What?
- 329. As soon as the king saw Ella,
- 330. and Ella saw King,
- 331. guess what.
- 332. (Responses)
- 333. And so there was a feast that evening.

He interrupts the flow of Taleworld imagery and addresses the audience directly: “Guess what?” With this question, audience and narrator are present again, commenting on the Taleworld, rather than being engrossed in it. The commentary concerns awareness of tropes and clichés. In a respectful nod to the audience, Morden ironically invokes their fairytale experience, acknowledging that they already know what happens in the stories when Young King meets Princess. Rather than boring them by presenting them with what they inevitably expect, he lets the audience supply it. He makes a joke of the predictability of this trope, and invites the audience to be in on it. He disrupts Taleworld attention to do so, bringing audience focus to the Telling-world by making them aware of the story as a story. However, since the break is intentional, it also gives him control. If the audience were simply bored by too-predictable

patterns, on the other hand, and let their attention wander away, it would be more difficult for him to negotiate their return. This way, he briefly leads them away, allowing them to supply the pieces they already know, and then smoothly leads them back. He thus invokes this inter-realm resonance between the audience's other-Taleworld experience and current Taleworld events in order to skirt a pitfall—namely, predictability—that would make the story less tellable.

Links to Other Realms Within the Enclave

While some frame breaks disrupt the Taleworld in order to make connections to the outside world or to other Taleworlds, others make connections within the enclave to the Telling-world, Realm of Conversation, or Event Realm. While the audience is immersed in the story events, they unreflectively engage with the Taleworld “as an ongoing reality” (Young, 1987, p. 68). A frame shift can “detach [the Taleworld] from that engagement, to render it subject to reflections, attitudes, evaluations, to draw perceivers back and lodge them in another realm, a realm from which they have a particular perspective on their experience” (*id.*) Such shifts thus cause the audience to “shift from absorption to abstraction” (p. 18). Frame breaks can thus aid with meaning and sense-making by creating a reflective distance and offering the audience a perspective on Taleworld events.

Some breaks draw attention to the Telling-world, disrupting absorption and encouraging reflection by awakening awareness of the story as a story. In one interesting and unusual example, Morden indulges in such a break during a moment of deep suspense. He interrupts the narrative right in the middle of describing a potent image. Having built propulsion toward this moment, he suddenly breaks it, mid-sentence, and launches into a Telling-world evaluation:

- 432. “King of the Giants, if ever I needed your help it’s now!”
- 433. The King of the Giants strode out of—
- 434. this is a lovely moment for storytelling, I love this mess coming up now.
- 435. I love it.

436. It's one of the moments...
437. (Laughter)
438. That, that *makes* me a storyteller.
439. The King of the Giants
...

Although this frame break shatters Taleworld focus at a critical moment, it actually strengthens the impact through emphatic evaluation. First, the aside serves as a strong evaluation of the story events to follow, both in its content and in its pacing. The content of this aside lets the audience know that now is the time to pay heightened attention, as he praises “this moment” that is coming up. The sudden halt in pacing underscores this evaluative effect, as he freezes this moment, which otherwise might have passed too quickly for the audience to enjoy its full power. He does so with self-conscious humor—as he yanks on the suspense, the audience responds with laughter. After lines 434 and 435, which are delivered quickly, the audience probably expects this brief aside to end. But when Morden repeats himself in 436, pausing at the end, he signals that he is going to keep them on the end of this thread a bit longer. The audience laughs at the tease. Morden knows from their response that this Taleworld evaluation has served its purpose—it has slowed the pace and set off the importance of the following image enough to prepare the audience to receive it with enhanced attention.

In addition to serving as evaluation of the Telling-world, in a way this aside is also a sort of evaluation of the Event Realm, or the Realm of Conversation. Morden extols the power of storytelling, and asks the audience to notice it in the scene to follow. He pulls them out of the Taleworld, removing them to a reflective distance before delivering the image, ensuring that they do not let the moment pass unreflectively.

He then returns to the narration and delivers the promised imagery, but then resumes his commentary.

439. The King of the Giants
440. *strode* over the ocean,
441. as though it were a puddle.
442. And then he pushed his fingers into the earth, and lifted the entire palace of the Princess of the Sun
443. onto his shoulder,
444. and waded back across the sea and placed the Palace of the Princess of the Sun beside the castle of the king.
445. All of that happened in our heads, ladies and gentlemen.

He departs from the Taleworld again to comment on the Telling-world—not on his own involvement in telling it, but on the role of the minds of the audience. He extols the power of storytelling, and the power of the mind to generate these images. Such moments, he seems to say, are why we all are here, at a storytelling festival. This is why this medium is magnificent and irreplaceable.

446. An impossible image in our heads.
447. And if Hollywood tried to do it,
448. they'd blow it.
449. (Laughter)
450. (Applause)
451. And we've got it here! *Points to head*
452. (Applause)
453. We didn't need..
454. The turnover of a third world country
455. (Laughter)
456. to manufacture that image.
457. We just did it here.
458. This is why I love storytelling.

This aside also establishes a relationship with and among the audience, touching on the collective aspect of the experience. This imaginal moment, he notes, is something that the audience accomplished together. In doing so, he evaluates the Event Realm, contributing to its overall mythos. Morden draws attention to the power of this communal experience—each member of the audience realizes that the same magical imagery has been shared by all the others present. The laughter and applause in 449, 450, and 452, signal agreement, rapport, and even

tribe, with the acknowledgment that this is a gathering of story-listeners. The applause in 452 seems to be specifically for this—for the audience members themselves, for this communal experience, and for the power of the human imagination. With this frame break Morden supercharges the Telling-world, the Event Realm, and even the larger world of storytelling, with significance. This carefully established inter-realm resonance is central, too, to the story's meaning. Given that this aside is so heavily evaluated and occupies in a place of such prominence in this performance, it perhaps is not a stretch to say that this is what this story is *about*.

Following this extended break, he transitions directly back into the imagery, without transition, trusting that the audience has followed him.

458. This is why I love storytelling.

459. The princess,

...

He summons up the subject of the sentence, using just the image of the princess to bring back the audience's focus. He seems to realize that he does not have to delicately re-induct the audience; at this point in the story, the pull of the Taleworld is like gravity. The tension and attention are deep enough to sustain such departures, and to pull the audience back automatically.

While some breaks draw attention to the Telling-world and encourage the audience to reflect on the story as a story, others create links to the Realm of Conversation by referencing something that the teller introduced in the preface. For instance, in his preface to *Tatterhood*, Morden draws the audience's attention to a peculiar prop:

56. I'd also like to thank Ed Stivender.

57. (Laughter)

58. For this *wonderful spoon*.

He offers no further explanation for the presence of the spoon, instead launching directly into the story. This is sufficient, though, to open a parenthesis in the minds of the audience, setting up an expectation. The audience knows, now, to look for the spoon, and are likely curious about what he intends to do with it. By introducing this in the preface, Morden creates a Realm-of-Conversation tether that he can later tie to the Taleworld. Because he has already established the connection, the frame break will not catch the audience unprepared.

The spoon appears in the Taleworld early on:

130. Tatterhood...
131. grew up in the stables with the animals.
...
135. She had no dolls,
136. so instead she played with *Ed Stivender's spoon!*
137. (Laughter)
138. Woohoo!
139. (Laughter)
140. Good old Ed.
141. (Laughter)

This frame break delights the audience, who laugh enthusiastically. It carries an element of rapport—the audience knows Stivender, a favorite festival teller, and with the connection, new-teller Morden establishes that they have a mutual friend. The synchronic repetition of the odd item, first established in the preface, adds to this rapport, as the audience enjoys being in on the joke.

Additionally, the break creates a delightful inter-realm resonance between the Taleworld and the Realm of Conversation that Morden established in the preface. Interestingly, he does not refer to his prop simply as “a wooden spoon,” as the item traditionally appears in the tale. He specifically names it “Ed Stivender’s spoon.” Ed Stivender and his spoon belong to the outside world, but with this mention, the audience sees them suddenly appear in the Taleworld. This transposition creates sparks, and the audience laughs at the resulting friction between realms.

Morden continues striking them together, adding “Good old Ed.” Stivender, sitting in the audience, also becomes a part of the fantasy Taleworld, somehow the source of Tatterhood’s spoon. As the boundaries between the Taleworld and the outside world are blurred, both realms expand in the minds of the audience.

The spoon appears again, in a different layer of discourse:

- 188. “Evil witches every one, they come to create chaos
- 189. in my *perfect palace*.”
- 190. Tatterhood: “Servants, fetch me *Ed Stivender’s spoon*.”
- 191. (Laughter)

Rather than appearing in the narration, as it did the first time, this time the spoon appears in dialogue. It is no longer in Morden’s mouth, no longer part of the narration and the Telling-world. Now, it is coming from *Tatterhood’s* mouth, and is thus more fully assimilated into the Taleworld. The collision between the realms is heightened, and the resulting sparks fly higher. When Tatterhood herself says “Ed Stivender,” with the vague and strange implication of acquaintance, the lines between the ordinary world and the fantastic Taleworld are blurred. With this shift into reported speech and the completion of the transposition of the spoon into the Taleworld, Morden thus creates a surprising inter-realm resonance that both serves as an engagement strategy in its own right, and creates Realm-of-Conversation connections that contextually ground the story.

Once “Ed Stivender’s spoon” is fully assimilated, Morden starts pitching it as a call-and-response:

- 242. “I’m the captain,
- 243. all I need is my goat,
- 244. my sister, and—”
- 245. (“Ed Stivender’s spoon.”)

Now the audience is fully inducted into the inside joke—they get to be the ones to say the punchline. Interestingly, this one happens as dialogue, too, so that the audience speaks the words coming from Tatterhood’s mouth. Additionally, by letting the audience fill in the repeated line, Morden helps to ensure that the joke does not get stale. This incorporation of the spoon into Telling-world call-and-response adds another layer to the inter-realm resonance.

Like Morden’s *Tatterhood*, Murphy’s *Meat of the Tongue* is also set up for intentional and repeated frame breaks that create resonance with the Realm of Conversation. In the preface, Murphy invites the interpreter to join her in an apparently improvised tandem telling. Throughout the telling, she draws attention to his actions, and thus to the Telling-world. For instance, in the story’s initial lines, Murphy describes a “big, strong, beautiful man.” Picking up on the opportunity she has pitched to him, the sign language interpreter flexes and indicates himself:

- 70. And this king was a *big*,
- 71. *strong*,
- 72. *beautiful* man. *Interpreter gestures*
- 73. (Laughter)

Following this, Murphy acknowledges the Telling-world even more directly, departing from the narration to refer directly to the interpreter’s actions:

- 74. That’s what I’m talking about.

She gives him further opportunities to perform for the audience:

- 95. And of course,
- 96. looking the way that he did... *Interpreter gestures*
- 97. (Laughter, cheering)
- 98. He would need the. Most. Beautiful woman in the world. *Interpreter gestures*
- 99. (Cheering, applause)

He indicates himself in line 96, and Murphy in line 98. The audience cheers and applauds enthusiastically. At this moment, the telling is less about the Taleworld and its characters than it

is about the relationships that are being navigated between the tellers and the audience. Murphy and the interpreter exhibit mutual affection, and because Murphy established this pattern in the preface, soliciting the audience's permission to graciously include the interpreter, the audience gets to participate in this relationship and sense of community. This frame break thus creates a resonance that suffuses every realm, encompassing Taleworld characters, Telling-world narration, the Realm-of-Conversation preface, and Event Realm relationships. This inter-realm resonance, in turn, gives the story contextual significance and contributes to its overall meaning, underscoring the story's themes of storytelling, communication and relationships.

Conversational Turns

A large class of frame breaks involves audience "turns." Tellers involve the audience by inviting them to participate, or by acknowledging contributions such as laughter and applause. Whenever the audience contributes in these ways, the automatic result is that the audience and teller become at least momentarily visible, so that attention is drawn away from the Taleworld and toward the Telling-world. While such breaks disrupt Taleworld focus, they contribute to the telling by turning it into a conversation. Instead of being a unidirectional performance, the telling becomes a mutual undertaking between teller and audience. By suggesting this co-creational pattern, this conversational format builds audience relationship and rapport. Such inter-realm connections thus contribute to the meaning of the performance, not by illuminating the significance of the tale, but by illuminating the relational significance of the telling.

Laughter and other audience responses. Audience laughter constitutes a turn at talk (Young, 1987, p. 58). As such, it also constitutes a frame break, a brief return to the Realm of Conversation. Each time the audience laughs, the teller must navigate the resultant frame shift. While tellers may not acknowledge the audience's laughter directly, they almost always respond

to it in some fashion, at the very least by pausing to make space for their laughter before continuing with the narration. This acknowledgment respects the audience's contribution, lending the telling the tone of a conversation, rather than a performance.

Sometimes tellers acknowledge laughter by breaking frame to respond, addressing the audience directly. For instance, in *The Gypsy and the Devil*, following a line of audience laughter, Murphy breaks from narrating with a direct address to the audience:

- 267. In a—in an orderly queue,
- 268. to go home.
- 269. (Laughter)
- 270. It's so true.
- 271. (Laughter)
- 272. And as they were filing out to go home [...]

She breaks from the narration to remark, "It's so true." The remark follows laughter, at a time when the Taleworld frame has already been disrupted, and she adds to the break with her acknowledgment, widening the gap. This acknowledgment makes their laughter not just a response to a performance, but a turn in a conversation. It shifts the tone of the joke, transforming it from a line delivered by a performer to an appreciative audience to a joke that is shared among friends. Murphy's frame break thus illuminates part of the meaning of the telling in the way that it navigates the relationship between teller and audience.

In *Meat of the Tongue*, Murphy breaks frame in a similar pattern. Following audience laughter at a subtle joke, she breaks frame more directly:

- 140. And she said, "No.
- 141. Everything's.. *fine*.
- 142. (Laughter)
- 143. Yes, you know, don't you?
- 144. (Laughter)
- 145. You know our secret code!
- 146. (Laughter)
- 147. It's not a very complex code.
- 148. But it is a blatant lie.

149. (Laughter)

She breaks from the narration, addressing the audience. This follows the same pattern as her progressive frame breaks in *The Gypsy and The Devil*. Initially, she makes an outside-world reference without breaking from the narration. When the audience laughs, signaling that they have understood the reference and thus that they are aware of the multiple frames in play, Murphy acknowledges the frame break more directly. Such a pattern allows Murphy to navigate frame boundaries gracefully, without jarring the audience. It also allows her to signal relationship and rapport by establishing a conversational rhythm. In this way, her response to the audience's laughter acknowledges their evaluative contribution, and establishes a pattern of conversational turn-taking.

In *King of the Herrings*, Morden briefly straddles boundaries in a similar way, breaking from reported Taleworld speech to address the audience directly:

397. "I want to be in *my* palace,
398. not yours."
399. The King...
400. "Jack..."
401. Oh yes.
402. (Laughter)
403. "You brought me the Princess,
404. bring me her *palace*.
405. (Laughter and murmurs)

After line 400, the tension in the audience is palpable, and some audible gasps rise from the crowd. Rather than ignoring the audience response and remaining within the Taleworld, he breaks, momentarily, and comments upon Taleworld events. Acknowledging that the audience is a beat ahead of him, he addresses what the audience seems to be thinking about the Taleworld. "Surely the king wouldn't..." But oh, yes he would. By drawing attention to the audience's

reaction to the story as a story, he pulls attention momentarily out of the Taleworld to the Telling-world.

This moment of high tension might seem an odd moment to break frame, but it is clear from the audience laughter that the effect is positive. As Bauman explains, such “meta-narrational statements” have the effect “of bridging the gap between the narrated event and the storytelling event by reaching out phatically to the audience, giving identificational and participatory immediacy to the story” (100). In this moment, Morden shifts footing, becoming visible as the storyteller, and reaching out to the audience with a direct address, responding to their audible suspense. This enhances the “participatory immediacy” of the moment as he invites them to appreciate the story with him, from his vantage point in the Telling-world. The “Oh yes” is thus also evaluative, carrying a tone of secret delight. It is an evaluation that glories in the magic of the Taleworld, where a king can demand that a palace be brought to him from across the sea. It is evaluation, too, of the Telling-world—it is evident that Morden loves the effect that this moment has on people. Underneath the narration, the audience can hear Morden say, “I love this story.” Rather than keeping his delight to himself, Morden breaks frame to invite the audience to be in on it. This break thus contributes to the significance of the telling by negotiating rapport with the audience.

Call-and-response and invited participation. Similar to its function in a story opening, during a story, call-and-response serves as a way of both encouraging and gauging audience engagement. Morden, in particular, tends to pepper his performances with call-and-response, as in this beginning to *The King of the Herrings*:

- 48. The boy’s name was—
- 49. (“Jack!”)

Following his preface naming the story a “Jack tale,” Morden lets the audience fill in the character’s name. Setting off the name like this, and having the audience say it, invokes the entire story tradition surrounding “Jack,” connecting the Taleworld to the preface and bringing to mind the genre, grounding the story in contextual relevance. Additionally, allowing the audience to fill in information they already know respects their attention, invites voluntary participation, and signals rapport by inviting phatic exchange.

For this reason, whenever there are iterative episodes, Morden tends to let the audience fill in the blank. For example, lines 179, 320, and 409 of *King of the Herrings* feature identical threats from the king, and each time he lets the audience fill in the final word.

408. “You will bring me the palace,
409. or I will cut off your—”
410. (“Head!”)

This synchronic repetition also allows the audience to signal their involvement—they have been paying attention, and so are able to fill in the blank. Additionally, as Tannen (2007) notes, repeating the words of other speakers “accomplishes a conversation” and “gives evidence of one’s own participation,” “sending a meta-message of involvement” (p. 61). With this call-and-response sequence, Morden thus establishes a conversational pattern, inviting the audience to mimic what in conversation would be taken “as a show of listenership” (p. 68).

Sometimes, tellers employ subtler signals, rather than an overt call-and-response pattern, to prompt participation. In *The Gypsy and the Devil*, for example, Murphy does not have to train the audience to respond, or directly ask for their participation. Instead, she uses repetition to invite a response:

215. And now all he needed to do was pick a place,
216. he needed to pick a place anywhere in Europe,
217. he needed to pick a city,
218. where he could find people in a tavern,

219. needed to pick any city in Europe...
220. (Audience yells out names of cities)

The repetition suggests deliberation and uncertainty. It is implied that if the audience responds, they will be acting helpfully, resolving a question for her. She uses these coded signals to cue participation, rather than soliciting it directly. In addition to fostering engagement and establishing a conversational pattern, this invitation also makes the audience part of the Telling-world. When Murphy acts out the audience's Telling-world suggestions in the Taleworld, it conveys the sense that they can affect the way this story goes. In turn, this makes the telling feel immediate and emergent. Murphy invites this break in order to connect the Telling-world and the Taleworld through the audience's contributions, and thus to establish a relationship with them as co-creators of the tale.

Summary

Throughout a performance, audience attention shifts constantly. Outside distractions can "break" the Taleworld frame, or storytellers can bend it, playing across boundaries intentionally. Frame breaks move focus away from the imaginal space of the Taleworld and toward the Telling-world, the Conversation or Event Realm, or the ordinary world.

When a frame is broken, intentionally or otherwise, storytellers have the opportunity to create moments of inter-realm resonance, connecting the Taleworld to the ordinary world or to other realms within the performance enclave. Because stories are "tellable on occasions," they require such links in order to be understood in context. It is these moments of inter-realm resonance that give a story an occasion, linking it to the wider world of the audience's experience and making it "tellable." It is also these moments of resonance that, by lodging the audience in an outside realm where they can reflect on the events of the Taleworld, afford a perspective for meaningful interpretation.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS: PART IV, ENDINGS

Most stories end briefly, in contrast to the dense layers of preface, opening, and orientation that accompany beginnings. This may make endings seem relatively simple, but in truth, the few lines that make up a story's ending are only the tip of the denouement iceberg. As Ricoeur (1980) explains, "The story's conclusion" is actually "the pole of attraction of the *entire development*" (p. 180, emphasis added). Everything that precedes it, prepares for it. Out of the ending grows the story's development, its beginning, and even its preface. This may be part of the reason that endings are so brief—from the very first line of a telling, there is coded information that gives the audience clues about how to monitor the story for its ending, ensuring that when it arrives, it is quickly recognized.

For its sense of consequentiality, and not merely sequentiality, an ending relies on the structure that links it to the rest of the story, and particularly to the beginning. "The appearance of consequentiality in narrative is produced by counting the last event taken from the Taleworld an end, and then constructing the story backwards to include whatever is necessary to account for it, thus arriving at the beginning" (Young, 1987, p. 29) Thus, as Smith (1968) explains, "The sense of closure is a function of the perception of structure."

This structure is not inherent to the Taleworld, but is imposed by the Telling-world frame. Taleworlds do not have endings; they are "experienced by their inhabitants not as beginning and ending, but as ongoing" (Young, 1987, p. 31). Tellers thus impose endings by determining the last reportable event. However, this does not mean that the ending may be arbitrarily chosen within Taleworld events. Rather, to enable sense-making and interpretation, an ending must exhibit a meaningful connection with the story's beginning (Young, 1987, p. 53).

Otherwise, the audience has no framework for grasping the story's point. For this reason, mere narrative sequence fails to be a story.

Additionally, as discussed in the previous chapter, even a cogent narrative sequence might fail to be meaningfully interpreted, if the teller fails to make inter-realm connections. Tellers must establish, not only the point of the tale, but the point of the telling. And as Young (1987) notes, it is the story's "relevance to *this occasion* which is the point of the telling" (p. 55, emphasis added). An ending thus also requires a level of inter-realm resonance if the story is to be meaningfully interpreted.

In essence, an effective ending must signal to the listener that the story is over, must demonstrate a cogent relationship between the ending and earlier elements, and must establish *tellability* or *reportability*, the reason that this story is told, and worth telling. Lastly, it must transition the audience's attention from the Taleworld and re-introduce them to the immediate conversation. In this way, effective endings function as bridges, linking the Taleworld to other levels of the discourse, both for the sake of meaningful interpretation and for the sake of smooth realm-shift.

In the samples I studied, I found that endings, despite their general brevity, still exhibit careful edgework and clustered involvement strategies. I also found that they exhibited key synchronic repetitions that served to illuminate the story's internal structure, particularly the relationship between the end and the beginning, creating a sense of consequentiality.

Edgework

Like beginnings, endings need to accomplish edgework, negotiating differences between realms as the teller prepares to shift from the Taleworld back to the conversation and the event. For this reason, involvement strategies often cluster around the ending, similarly to the way they

do in the beginning. In particular, as they approach the end, tellers often lace their lines with repetition. This ending to *The Gypsy and the Devil*, for instance, exemplifies this:

- 336. And the gypsy said “Well devil, you know,
- 337. you know when I said goodbye to it,
- 338. yeah? You remember when I..pulled it up to my lips,
- 339. do you know what I did?
- 340. I sucked out my soul.
- 341. Because that’s where it lives.
- 342. Under the strings of my fiddle.
- 343. And you can’t play music if you don’t have a soul.

The repetition is evaluative, cuing the audience to the import of the final events, ensuring they do not miss the significance. “You know, you know” repeats across 336-337. “You remember” picks up a repetition of this idea, and “you know” appears again in 339. As the gypsy asks the Devil if he remembers this moment, the second-person address has the twin effect of also addressing the audience, asking them the same question and ensuring reflection. Once Murphy has asked this a thorough four times, she releases the answer to the riddle: “I sucked out my soul.” The repetition of initial sounds adds evaluative emphasis to this line. She couches it in further repetition, restating the image, if not the language, twice more in short, emphatic lines—“Because that’s where it lives. / Under the strings of my fiddle.” With this repetition and rhythm, she builds up to a line that summarizes the story’s heart: “And you can’t play music if you don’t have a soul.” Thus the repetition in this ending section serves an evaluative purpose, drawing attention to the connections Murphy makes to earlier Taleworld elements. Revealing the relationship of the end to the beginning, these connections help to establish the point of the tale.

Following the evaluation, the story winds down with some final lines from the Devil:

- 345. And the Devil said,
- 346. “You’re smart, gypsy.
- 347. You’re smart, I like you.
- 348. Keep the fiddle.
- 349. Keep playing,

- 350. 'cause every time you play,
- 351. people sin.
- 352. And every time they sin,
- 353. they end up at my door—anyway.

As she transitions into the story with repetition, so she transitions out of it. Almost every line of these last nine is part of a repetition pair. “You’re smart” repeats across 346-347. Repetition of “Keep” at the beginning of 348 and 349 forms a short anaphora. “Play” and “playing” are the last words in 349 and 350. “Every time” links the last two sentences, creating a syllogism, with the repeated “people sin/they sin” as the middle term. Finally, the story ends on a sort of rhyme, with “play” in 350 and “anyway” in 353. These involvement strategies involve the audience’s ear like the final chords of a song, granting these lines the “sound” of an ending to match the evaluative “sense.” With these sound and sense strategies combined, Murphy effects a smooth transition out of the Taleworld frame.

Adding to the layers of repetition, tellers often use rhythm to signal an ending, employing a marked slowing of pace, coupled with short, rhythmic lines:

- 104. And he looked at the falafel shop owner and he said, “You’ve been paid.”
- 105. (Laughter)
- 106. Falafel shop owner said “What?! What?!”
- 107. Because he wasn’t as clever as you, he didn’t figure it out.
- 108. (Laughter)
- 109. And the judge said,
- 110. “Well, if we’re gonna charge him
- 111. with stealing a smell
- 112. he can pay
- 113. with the sound
- 114. of money.”
- 115. (Laughter and applause)

As Murphy approaches the final lines of *Sound of Money*, she shortens her lines to two to four words, and her pace slows. The number of syllables per line likewise declines. In the lines leading up to the ending, lines are generally ten or more syllables. As she delivers the punch line,

this drops from seven in line 110, to five in 111, to three. This slowing suggests a sort of funnel toward the final line. The three-syllable structure repeats for the three final lines, lending a rhythmic quality that further adds to this effect. Additionally, lines 110-114 together form a rhythmic, mostly anapestic seven-beat line. The final line breaks the pattern of the six anapestic beats that precede it, giving a sense of finality. Together, these involvement strategies give these lines the “sound” of an ending, contributing to a smooth realm transition.

In addition to the “sound” of an ending, the edgework must also accomplish the “sense” of an ending. This is done through the story’s final frame “break,” the transition from the Taleworld back to the external world. This break accomplishes all the functions of any frame break—it serves as an involvement strategy, creates inter-realm resonance, and establishes relevance. It also serves the additional function of smoothing the audience’s exit from the Taleworld, Telling-world, and Realm of Conversation, simultaneously offering them a bridge back to the external world and offering them an outside perspective from which to view Taleworld events.

The final frame break often begins subtly before the Taleworld’s closing lines. In *Tatterhood*, for instance, Morden begins the shift back into the external world from inside the Taleworld:

- 464. And so that day there was a wedding, a double wedding.
- 465. And after the wedding such a feast they had.
- 466. Fried chicken,
- 467. pimento cheese—
- 468. (Laughter)
- 469. Sweet potato washed down with sweet tea and tapioca.
- 470. (Laughter)

From within the Taleworld, he introduces a few foreign elements. In doing so, he offers a cultural nod to the audience, who recognizes these as local, Southern foods. Additionally, he

gently shakes up suspension of disbelief—these are not the foods of once-upon-a-time, but the foods of here and now. This creates a sort of friction, helping to shake the audience loose from Taleworld focus, gently transitioning them back to the present world. In addition, evoking details of the smells and tastes of food might make the audience aware of their physical presence in the Event Realm, where their physical needs have been neglected for a time. Thus with this subtle reminder to the audience, Morden begins to extract them before the story even reaches its closing lines.

Other times, the connection between realms follows the end of the story, appearing as commentary *after* the final Taleworld event. In such stories, tellers might conclude with what Young calls a “closing.” Closings mark the boundary of the Telling-world, signaling the end of narrative discourse. As a sort of pivot, they “orient hearers to the Taleworld and to the realm of conversation while providing a transition between the two” (Young, 1987, p. 35). For instance, in *Chopsticks*, Murphy follows the final lines of the story with Realm-of-Conversation commentary:

- 126. “Well no, because
- 127. you know where I ended up,
- 128. we take those 10-foot-long chopsticks,
- 129. and we feed
- 130. each other.”
- 131. So here at this festival,
- 132. may the stories be food for your souls.
- 133. And take these with you.
- 134. Thank you.
- 135. (Applause)

By repeating the Taleworld theme giving food to others, she transposes a story element metaphorically into the Event Realm. Taleworld imagery becomes Event Realm significance. This connection provides the audience with a smooth transition from the Taleworld, simultaneously giving them a vantage point from which they can reflect on Taleworld events.

The inter-realm connection thus provides not only transition, but context, establishing the significance of the story and giving the audience a lens with which to interpret it.

Murphy's closing also harks back to the themes of community that she explored in the preface. This connection serves to both guide the audience back to the Realm of Conversation, and to establish a connection that bears on the meaning of the tale. In a similar example, Murphy makes a closing connection to the preface that bears on the meaning of the telling, rather than the tale. Following her telling of *The Gypsy and the Devil*, Murphy obliquely quips:

- 353. (Laughter)
- 354. (Applause)
- 355. Now, I'm not here,
- 356. I'm not here to put thoughts in your head,
- 357. *you* decide where Bil Lepp inspired me in that story.
- 358. (Laughter)
- 359. It's totally up to you.

Repetition of the joke established in the preface (that Bil Lepp would be the theme of her set) creates a sense of closure. As Young (1987) notes, "Repetition appears to create a closural effect both by creating a sense of saturation with the pattern repeated and . . . by doubling back over and thus reversing the flow of discourse (p. 34).

Additionally, for the audience, who have been involved in the Taleworld and whose focus is still transitioning, this provides the first opportunity for outside reflection on the Taleworld. The audience signals with laughter that they have caught the joke. With this, Murphy smoothly transitions out of the Taleworld, linking the Taleworld's final speaker—the Devil—to Bil Lepp, who now serves as an Event World anchor. She thus gives the audience a bridge between the Taleworld and the conversation and event realms that they can use to exit, as well as an inter-realm connection that provides the story with contextual relevance.

Repetition

For an effective ending that provides a sense of consequentiality, repetition is indispensable. The necessity for repetition grows from the relationship of end to beginning. For the story to make sense, the audience must be able to recognize this relation as cogent (Young, 1987, p. 53). In order to establish this relationship, some element of the beginning must be repeated at the end, closing the circuit. In this way, repetition is a signal to infer a consequential relationship, rather than merely a sequential one. As Young (1987) explains, “Beginnings and ends are introduced into the Taleworld by the Storyrealm, thus rendering consequential what is merely consecutive” (p. 31). Thus beginnings and ends “constitute . . . instructions that the events within the boundary are to be taken in relation to one another” (p. 31).

For this reason, stories inevitably end with some kind of synchronic repetition that harks back to earlier story elements, such as in Murphy’s ending to *Meat of the Tongue*:

398. And the king looked at his wife,
399. and he finally understood,
400. what the fishmonger meant,
401. when he said that he fed his wife
402. “meat..
403. of the tongue.”
404. (Applause)

The final line repeats an earlier piece of dialogue, an image and a theme that was threaded throughout the story. Murphy slows for the delivery, shortening the length of the final idea units, marking the ending and signaling the significance. Though she offers no further closing or coda, neatly concluding it here, the ending is still unambiguous. Young (1987) explains that the repetition alone is enough to signal the end of a story. “Repetition appears to create a closural effect both by creating a sense of saturation with the pattern repeated, and by laying an evaluative emphasis on the element to be taken as the end of the story. The effect is produced by

doubling back over and thus reversing the flow of discourse” (p. 34). This sort of synchronic repetition both signals the end of the story and places evaluative emphasis on its punchline.

Morden similarly closes *Tatterhood* without a closing or coda, relying on his intonation, slowing speech, and thematic repetition to mark the ending clearly.

483. And after the wedding,
484. the king,
485. Ella,
486. the prince and Tatterhood...
487. drank..from the bridal cup,
488. both deep..
489. and long.

In this instance, it is not Taleworld dialogue or images that he repeats to establish consequentiality, but rather story themes. The first line, “perfect palace,” stands in opposition to the final line, which represents an embrace—gracefully alluded to—of imperfection, embodied by Tatterhood. This thematic repetition, linking the beginning and end, implies consequentiality, hinting at the point of the narrative.

He bounds *King of the Herrings* similarly, with the quarryman and Jack. At the beginning the child was wished for, and at the end, he is safely raised to manhood:

570. But you are a man now.
571. A grown man.
572. And so I will go to heaven.
573. Where I belong.”

The repetition of “man” across lines 570 and 571, together with the rhythmic slowing of pace, gives these lines the sound of an ending. At the same time, the thematic repetition, and the repetition of the story’s initial characters and events, give the story the *sense* of an ending.

The ending to *The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew*, which elicits a particularly strong audience response, is an illustrative example of the use of repetition to create consequentiality.

The story essentially has two endings—one for the inner frame story, and one for the primary

narrative. The inner ending exhibits the pattern of repetition, reprising the images and language of the beginning:

Table 1

| Ending | Beginning |
|--|--|
| 648. He said, | |
| 649. “I have had an idea!” | |
| 650. Outside the village, | |
| 651. there is a house, we call it the <i>weeping house</i> . | 219. Once, there was a weeping house. |
| 652. It’s said, | 236. “I’ve heard... |
| 653. if any young woman | 237. if any young woman, |
| 654. can make the young man in that house smile, | 238. can make the young man in this house smile, |
| 655. she can marry him. | 239. she can marry him. |
| 656. You should go there | |
| 657. and try your luck.” | 240. I want to try.” |

This follows an earlier repetition of other language that the audience will have remembered, directly mirroring lines from the beginning:

Table 2

| Ending | Beginning |
|---|---|
| 642. until her hair | 227. Her hair [...] |
| 643. was clogged with twigs and leaves, | 227. [...] was clogged with twigs and leaves, |
| 644. until her clothes were no more than greasy rags. | 228. her clothes no more than greasy rags, |
| 645. Until she’d worn away her shoes. | 229. she was barefoot. |

Here, Morden repeats the subordinate clause structure, beginning each line with “until.” This repetition underscores the repetition of the attendant images, which the audience will remember from the beginning of the story. The repetition of the early story elements—the weeping house, the young woman with her haggard appearance—simultaneously provides an ending to the inner story, and serves as a transition into the outer frame story. The audience

suddenly recognizes the teller of the inner story as that story's main character. This merging of elements from the two Taleworlds provides a striking conclusion to the inner story.

The story's final ending follows. Leading up to the final image, each and every line is a repetition of an earlier Taleworld element.

Table 3

| Ending | Beginning |
|---|--|
| 659. When the story ended, | 266. "Listen to me, 267. and I will tell you a story . . ." |
| 660. you remember the young man sitting at the end of his bed? | 222. and upstairs a young man sat at the end of his bed, ... 251. There sat the young man at the end of his bed, . . . |
| 661. He wasn't crying. | 224. He cried for some bad luck he could no longer remember. |
| 662. He was smiling. | 236. if any young woman can make the young man in this house smile . . . |
| 663. He looked at his clenched fist, | 223. his hand clenched into a fist. ... 251. . . . his hand clenched into a... 252. ("Fist.") |

Morden first lays heavy synchronic repetition, touching on all of the elements from the beginning that contribute most vitally to the understanding of the final ending. His groundwork laid, he then closes with a potent transposition of a Taleworld image:

- 664. he opened his hand, and...
- 665. *Morden opens his hand to reveal a single green leaf*
- 666. (Gasps, murmuring)
- 667. (Applause)

When Morden opens his hand toward the audience, there is an actual green leaf in his palm. The effect is striking. It is a transposition that provides both ending and coda to this story, in a way that wraps all the realms together in sudden synchronization.

The leaf itself is a synchronic repetition of an earlier story element, one that has driven the narrative from the beginning, the titular “Leaves.” It is established earlier in the story that the leaves have the power of transformation. It is these leaves that allow the young man to escape his cursed form, and that repeatedly allow the two characters to escape from peril. Near the end of their escape, when they are separated, they each take one of the last two leaves. The young woman uses hers to escape. The young man gets away, but is struck with a curse of forgetting. The curse continues until the final lines, when the young man, having been reminded of his own story, finally stops crying and opens his hand. At this moment, the final closing is wrapped up in a single symbol, the leaf that is simultaneously revealed in the hand of the boy and in the hand of the storyteller.

This prop usage provides for a powerful transposition, one that brings a Taleworld element cascading through the other realms that enclose it. It appears in the Telling-world, as Morden uses it as a prop, and there is something of the feel of a magician completing a trick. Even more powerful, though, is the appearance of the leaf in the external world. Throughout the story, the leaf has been a symbol of growth, of hope, of the possibility of transformation. At the end, when it appears in Morden’s hand, a sort of doubling happens. The Taleworld significance—the main character re-discovering the hope of transformation and the power lodged in his own story—becomes real-world significance. As the character opens his hand, and the leaf suggests these things to him, so it is that as Morden opens his hand, the leaf promises these things to the audience. When the leaf appears in ordinary reality, the lines between the Taleworld and the external world are blurred, letting the magic and significance of the leaf suffuse ordinary reality. The transposed leaf becomes the audience’s hope and their injunction to remember.

This synchronic repetition thus provides the story with powerful waves of inter-realm resonance, giving the ending a sense of deep consequentiality. It also transitions the audience, all at once, from the Taleworld, as the Taleworld leaf suddenly appears in the immediate present, instantly connecting the two realms. The transposition also functions like a sort of metaphorical coda, the subtext of which might read, “And to this day, this hope exists.” This bridge brings the audience back to the external world, but now it is a world transformed by the Taleworld—another promise of the leaf.

Summary

Though ending framing is generally brief, it still is layered and complex. An effective ending must signal to the listener that the story is over, must demonstrate a cogent relationship between the ending and earlier elements, and must establish tellability or reportability, the reason that this story is told, and worth telling. Lastly, it needs to smoothly transition the audience out of the Taleworld in a way that gives them a meaningful perspective on Taleworld events.

In the samples I studied, I found that endings exhibit careful edgework and clustered involvement strategies similar to the patterns found at story beginnings. I also found that tellers invariably employ synchronic repetition to link the beginning and end of the story, illuminating the story’s internal structure to create a sense of consequentiality. Lastly, I found that tellers employ repetition across realms in story endings, closings, and codas, to create inter-realm resonance, linking the story to its occasion and creating bridges to help the audience smoothly exit the Taleworld.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

This study aims to offer a phenomenological account of the story transport experience in performance storytelling, exploring, through frame and discourse analysis, how storytellers shift attention from the immediate performance space to the imaginal world of the story. This chapter discusses my findings in the context of the framework of the already existing literature; explores some potential implications for storytelling and its applied fields; and suggests implications and indications for future work.

Young (1987, 2004) offered a phenomenology of narrative, and a basic topography of frames in storytelling, building on the basic formal structure outlined by Labov and Waletzky (1967). Young found that stories form enclaves in what she called the “Realm of Conversation,” and for a teller to begin a narrative, he must first signal that he intends to shift into another form of discourse, and obtain tacit permission to do so. She calls this shift into the Telling-world the “preface,” and the agreement to suspend the usual trade of utterance turns a “ticket.”

This study found that performance storytellers must accomplish additional framing near the beginning of a performance, to give a story the grounding and topical relevance that in ordinary conversation would be provided by context. To this end, prefaces are often much more expansive than they would be in conversational narrative, and tickets are more prominent and sometimes more ritualized. In order to anchor audience attention, tellers begin by establishing a topical starting point, clearing the ground of potential Event Realm distractions, and orienting the audience to unique features of the Telling-world.

Young (1987, 2004) found that in order to ease the shift into the telling, tellers often include “openings” which mediate the boundary between the Telling-world and the Realm of

Conversation. Young (1987, 2004) and Labov and Waletzky (1967) also note that storytellers often include a section of background information near the beginning of the telling, familiarizing the audience with the background constants of the Taleworld. They call this the “orientation.”

The study found that performance storytellers make artful use of these shifting frames to guide attention smoothly into and out of the Taleworld. To smooth the shift from the Realm of Conversation to the Telling-world, from the telling to the Taleworld, and back again, performance storytellers cluster what Tannen (2007) calls “involvement strategies” around moments of transition, particularly around frame changes. Through repetition, rhythm, and detail, they artfully hold and guide attention through potentially jarring realm shifts. Though involvement strategies can be found anywhere in a storytelling performance, they appear in greater density around the story’s “edgework,” smoothing entry and exit.

Young (1987) described sense as a relation between multiple levels or frames. While sequence, she says, is located within one realm, meaning is necessarily a relation between two (p. 219). For this reason, sense-making depends on building connections between realms, shifting the audience from absorption to abstraction, and giving distance for reflection. This “interplay between engagement and detached awareness is how we come to understandings” (4).

This study found that throughout a performance, every realm remains in play, and can assert itself—through the storyteller’s intention, or through unintentional distraction—at any moment. This breaks the frame of the Taleworld, shifting attention to the Telling-world, the Conversation or Event Realm, or the ordinary world. Sometimes, this is intentional, as when tellers play across the boundaries between realms. Sometimes, it is unintentional, as when distractions arise. Intentional or unintentional, when a frame breaks, storytellers have the

opportunity to create moments of inter-realm resonance, connecting the Taleworld to the realms that enclose it, enhancing the story's "tellability" and grounding it in its conversational context.

Young notes that for its sense of consequentiality, and not merely sequentiality, an ending relies on the structure that links it to the rest of the story, particularly to the beginning. "The appearance of consequentiality in narrative is produced by counting the last event taken from the Taleworld an end, and then constructing the story backwards to include whatever is necessary to account for it, thus arriving at the beginning" (Young p. 29?) Thus, as Smith (1968) explains, "The sense of closure is a function of the perception of structure." To bound the end of a performance, tellers employ "closings," which parallel openings and signal that a telling has come to an end, and "codas," which parallel prefaces and bring the listeners back to the Realm of Conversation.

This study found that despite their general brevity, endings exhibit clustered involvement strategies similar to those found in story beginnings. Additionally, tellers employ synchronic repetition, particularly of early story elements, to create a sense of closure and of consequentiality. Lastly, in addition to transitioning the audience out of the Taleworld, story endings, closings, and codas also establish links between realms, creating inter-realm resonance.

In essence, the study found that framing in performance storytelling is highly evaluative. What conversational storytellers might do naturally to some degree, performance storytellers do with the intentionality of art. Frame transitions are set off by linguistic involvement strategies, ensuring that the transition effectively carries audience attention. And throughout a telling, discourse is shaped around frame shifts that draw attention to significant elements, especially those that provide a telling with relevance and "tellability" and those that contribute to meaningful story interpretation.

Discussion and Interpretation

These findings suggest that the structure of a performance and the framing of narrative content are at least as important to a storytelling event as the content itself. Given the way that engagement strategies cluster, not during the Taleworld, or even necessarily at its best moments, but rather along its edges and at moments of transition, it may even suggest that the framing is *more* important, that it truly is “not the tale, but the telling” that makes the story. I venture that frame study of storytelling performance could add to the conversation—in applied fields, in possible systems of criticism, and in the way storytellers practice and understand their art—by shifting attention from intra-realm concerns like content and technique and focusing it more on inter-realm connections.

The fact that tellers spend considerable performance time and artistic effort navigating between frames and playing across realm boundaries suggests that the content of the Taleworld—or any realm—alone is far less important than how that content relates to the other realms in play, and how this interplay ultimately gives the audience a new perspective on ordinary reality. Chapter Five, with its discussion of inter-realm resonance, demonstrates that the end of framing is not merely Taleworld attention. Rather, Taleworld attention itself is a means to establishing this resonance. Story transport is not for the sake of escape, then, or not merely so, and it is not meant to leave an audience empty-handed upon exiting. Rather, it is meant to supply them with new connections that they can bring with them upon their return to reality, to then experience that reality in new, Taleworld-infused colors.

Frame analysis of performance storytelling could give storytellers new ways of understanding and talking about their art. Generally, tellers who write about storytelling focus on aspects of the Telling-world and the Taleworld, treating these realms as discrete and

disconnected. They focus on story content and structure, or on telling-world techniques such as character voices and body movement. My results seem to suggest that even if such aspects are executed flawlessly, a performance can still fall flat. Even if everything within each realm is artfully arranged, if the realms do not interact meaningfully, the story will lack consequentiality and tellability. Thus story teaching and criticism that focuses primarily on elements like Taleworld content or Telling-world criticism, while still valuable, is also limited. On the other hand, a system of criticism with a vocabulary for discussing inter-realm interaction might allow storytellers to discuss, teach, and evaluate their art in new ways.

Storytellers themselves often note that what is real and vivid about their art cannot be abstracted. They know that storytelling is emergent; it happens “in the moment.” They understand that a performance cannot be recorded or duplicated for this reason, because it is necessarily contextually situated. It goes against this understanding to limit systems of criticism to Taleworld and Telling-world advice, which are the sorts of things that can be abstracted, recorded, de-contextualized. Indeed, “contextually situated” necessarily refers to interaction between realms. The effectiveness of a performance depends largely on how it is framed, how these connections between realms are established. Frame analysis offers a potential method of storytelling criticism that encompasses a performance’s context and all the ways that text and context, narrated event and narrative event, interact.

This has implications, too, for how storytelling is used in applied fields. A detailed analysis of how applied fields approach storytelling is beyond the scope of this paper, but in general, applied storytelling often focuses far more on content or on Taleworld structure than on overall telling and event connections. Such analyses often reflect form divorced from function. Frame analysis could thus significantly add to the discussion of how storytelling might be

effectively employed in its various applied fields, with the recognition that “the power of storytelling,” in a courtroom or a classroom or a board room, is not about mere narrative sequence, but about connections between realms of discourse.

The concept of framing can add to the discussion of what makes for effective storytelling. In particular, focusing on the function of framing, rather than the form, has the potential to add to understanding of applied storytelling, criticism of performance storytelling, and in general, discussion of the “power of storytelling.”

Further Directions

Several researchers who have studied story-listening attention have suggested possible future directions of study. Some have suggested quantitative, physiological studies. Stallings, for instance, suggests studying “physiological activity in brain hemispheres during story-listening trance” (p. 23). Sturm (2000) reiterates the possibility of studying “neurological studies of the brain’s activity while listening to stories,” adding “neurochemical studies of the possible relationship between the story-listening trance and chemical changes in the body” (p. 303). Such studies might even be able to approach a way to measure the effectiveness of involvement strategies by examining physiological responses.

Some have also suggested directions for applied storytelling study. Sturm (2000) discusses the possibility of “functional studies of how the story-listening trance can be used (such as for anesthetic or therapeutic purposes) and enjoyed (for relaxation, meditation, and possible healing)” (p. 303). Along the lines of these functional studies, I would further suggest studying how story-listening attention can be used in other domains of applied storytelling, such as education. For instance, Abrahamson (1998) discusses how the “conversational trance induction,” according to the model developed by Milton Erickson and Ernest Rossi, might be

used by storytellers to induce focused attention in such a way as to enhance classroom learning. Further exploration of this possibility could add, not only to our understanding of the story-listening transport phenomenon, but to the ability of storytellers to contribute meaningfully in fields of applied storytelling.

In addition, as this study was not able to address larger considerations of the implications of genre, culture, and venue upon narrative framing, these make for interesting future studies. For example, it might be fruitful to examine in what ways the framing of personal stories departs from the framing of the fictional genres examined here. Considerations of language background, regional style, and culture might also feature differences in framing and linguistic involvement strategies; studying these differences might provide more nuanced and definitive results.

Conclusion

Storytellers have the ability, through their art, to lift attention from the mundane world and raise it to an imaginal reality. Linking this reality to the world of the everyday, they enrich ordinary reality by infusing it with the insights and images of the imaginal world. In the way that they shape attention, storytellers help audiences to make meaning, not just out of the Taleworld events, but out of the events in their own lives of which stories are the spiritual reflections. To this end, tellers guide attention artfully into the Taleworld, where they then establish the patterns and links that allow the audience to carry meaning beyond the story. With its boundary so close alongside the edge of everyday reality, story allows for meaning to flow back and forth across the porous frames of the Taleworld and ordinary reality. This, ultimately, is the purpose of framing in storytelling.

REFERENCES

- Abrahamson, C. E. (1998). Storytelling as a pedagogical tool in higher education. *Education*, 118(3), 440-452.
- Bateson, G. (1955). A theory of play and fantasy. *Psychiatric Research Reports*, 2, 39-51.
- Barthes, R. (1975). An introduction to the structural analysis of narrative. *New Literary History* 6(2) 237-272.
- Bauman, R. (1986). *Story, performance, and event: Contextual studies of oral narrative*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Bobo, J. (2010). *The Best Story Wins: Advice for New Prosecutors*. New York, NY: Tower.
- Campbell, J (1969). *The masks of god: Primitive mythology*. New York, NY: Viking Press.
- Chafe, W. L. (1980). "The deployment of consciousness in the production of a narrative." In *The pear stories: Cognitive, cultural, and linguistic aspects of narrative production* (pp. 9-50). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Pub. Corp.
- Charon, R. (2006). *Narrative Medicine: Honoring the Stories of Illness*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Davis, D. (2005). *Telling Your Own Stories*. Atlanta, GA: August House Pub., Inc.
- Dennett, D. (1984). "Cognitive wheels: The frame problem of Artificial Intelligence." In C. Hookaway (Ed.), *Minds, machines and evolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Denning, S. (2011). *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ellis, E. (2012). *From Plot to Narrative*. Chicago, IL: Parkhurst Brothers Inc.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Goodall, H.L. (2000). *Writing the new ethnography*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Labov, W. (2001). "Uncovering the event structure of narrative." In D. Tannen & J.E. Alatis (Eds.), *Georgetown University Round Table on Linguistics and Languages* (63-83). Georgetown: Georgetown University Press. <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~wlabov/uesn.pdf>
- Labov, W. (2006). Narrative pre-construction. *Narrative Inquiry*, 16(1), 37-45.
- Labov, W. and J. Waletzky (1967). "Narrative analysis." In J. Helm (ed.) *Essays on the verbal and visual arts*, 12-44. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.
- Lipman, D. (1999). *Improving Your Storytelling*. Atlanta, GA: August House Pub., Inc.
- Peterson, J. and J. Flanders (2002). Complexity management theory: Motivation for ideological rigidity and social conflict. *Cortex*, 38(3), 429-458.
- Polanyi, L. (1989). *Telling the American story: A structural and cultural analysis of conversational storytelling*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (1980). Narrative Time. *Critical Inquiry*, 7(1), 169-190.
- Schiffrin, D. (1981). Tense variation in narrative. *Language*, 57(1), 45-62.
- Simms, L. (2011). *Our Secret Territory: The Essence of Storytelling*. Boulder, CO: Sentient Pub., LLC.
- Smith, B. (1978). *On the Margins of Discourse*. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press.
- Sobol, J. D. (1999). *The storytellers' journey: An American revival*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Stallings, F. (1988). The web of silence: The storyteller's power to hypnotize [PDF file]. <http://healingstory.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/TheWebOfSilence.pdf> (Reprinted from *National Storytelling Journal*, 5(2), 6-21).

- Sturm, B. W. (2000). The 'storytelling trance' experience. *Journal of American Folklore*, 113(449), 287-304.
- Tannen, D. (Ed.). (1993). *Framing in discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tannen, D. & Wallat, C. (1993). Interactive frames and knowledge schemas in interaction: Examples from a medical examination interview. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Framing in discourse* (pp. 57–113). New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tannen, D. (2007). *Talking voices: Repetition, dialogue, and imagery in conversational discourse*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Thomason, T. C. (2009). Commonalities between Ericksonian psychotherapy and Native American healing. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 31(4), 351-362.
- Young, K. (1987). *Taleworlds and Telling-worlds: The phenomenology of narrative*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Young, K. (2004). "Frame and boundary in the phenomenology of narrative." In M.-L. Ryan (Ed.), *Narrative across media* (pp. 109-137). Lincoln, NE: Nebraska University Press.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Idea units are set off by paragraph breaks and numbered. Punctuation attempts to preserve the speaker's rhythm and intonation, rather than grammatical conventions (Tannen, 2007, p. 193). The following transcription conventions are used:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| , | Comma indicates clause-final intonation, but not final falling intonation (sense of more to come) |
| . | Period indicates final falling intonation |
| ? | Indicates rising final intonation |
| ! | Indicates exclamatory intonation; in parentheses, indicates emphasis in audience participation, e.g., (Laughter!) |
| : | Colon following vowel indicates elongation of vowel sound |
| — | An em dash indicates a brief stop, with a pause less than half a second |
| .. | Two dots indicate a short pause, ranging from roughly half a second to a second |
| ... | Three dots indicate a long pause, of roughly a second or more |
| () | Material in parentheses is contributed by the audience; may summarize, e.g., (Laughter) or (Applause), or quote, e.g., ("Hello!") |
| * * | Material in asterisks describes teller gestures or non-verbal aspects of delivery, e.g., *laughs* or *whispered* |
| “ ” | Indicates dialogue or reported speech; in parentheses, indicates audience speech |
| <i>italics</i> | Indicates emphatic stress |
| CAPS | Indicates intense emphatic stress |

APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIPTS, CLARE MURPHY

The Gypsy and the Devil

1. (Applause)
2. Hello,
3. hello,
4. hello:o,
5. hello?
6. Hello!
7. (“Hello!”)
8. Can you hear me?
9. (Response)
10. Well! *laugh*
11. That was amazing.
12. 50% of you said no.
13. Um, can you hear me at the back?
14. (Response)
15. Um, ok. I’ll stop joking, then; put your hands up if you *can’t* hear me.
16. (Laughter)
17. One person here, and most of this side.
18. Can we
19. put that up any higher?
20. The magic man, Kenyan, is over there, and he’s gonna fix things,
21. and I’m gonna talk *really loudly*.
22. (Cheering)
23. Yeah?
24. (Applause)
25. Thank you.
26. I just was a bit thrown there, because the emcee just said he was in love with me.
27. And..
28. at least that’s what I heard, I dunno.
29. I mean,
30. that, did I get that wrong?
31. So, it is—
32. amazing to see so many faces in here,
33. for this set,
34. obviously everyone is here to see—
35. Bil Lepp. So...
36. (Laughter)
37. Um, knowing that,

38. you know I came here knowing that, and um,
39. I decided to choose my stories—
40. based around Bil's character.
41. (Laughter)
42. And I'm not gonna say
43. what it is in the stories
44. you can't hear me, Bil?
45. I'll talk louder.
46. Um..
47. I'll leave it up to you
48. to glean
49. which character inspired me to choose that story,
50. um, to do with Bil.
51. And you can figure it out at the end.
52. So..
53. I'll see you out there.
54. Once...
55. a long, long, long time ago,
56. wandering the streets of Europe,
57. there was a very... lonely... gypsy.
58. Now this gypsy had long since left his people,
59. and he wandered by himself
60. and gypsies were untouchables in those days,
61. nobody spoke to them,
62. nobody looked at them.
63. And without any of his family, and any of his friends,
64. this gypsy had only one thing keeping him company,
65. and that
66. was his fiddle,
67. which he kept carefully wrapped in a cloth under his cloak...
68. and whenever he needed to speak louder, a sound man would magically appear...
69. (Laughter)
70. ...would adjust his lower back, and the gypsy would continue to talk and be heard by
everybody.
71. (Laughter and cheering)
72. Now this fiddle was his only company,
73. and what he would do when he would play it, his fingers would dance!
74. On top of those strings.
75. The way the bow..
76. moved..

77. it was as smooth as water.
78. And what he would do is he would wander around, he would look for the people most
likely to give him a lot of money.
79. That's really what you have to do when you make your living,
80. as an artist,
81. on the street.
82. So the gypsy would wander around,
83. and he would wait until he would get to a tavern.
84. A tavern,
85. and he could hear the sounds inside,
86. he could hear the clinking of the glasses,
87. he could hear the—
88. the louder talking as the night went on and he would wait.
89. He would wait until he knew the tavern would be closing and then he would set up,
90. he would put out his little hat.
91. He would take out the fiddle,
92. he'd unwrap it and warm it up.
93. And when the people finally would push against the door so much and the bell would go
for last orders,
94. and they would pour out onto the street,
95. he would start to play.
96. And he would pull that bow against the strings with such
97. magnificent
98. mastery,
99. that everybody would just stop.
100. And despite themselves, because he was a gypsy,
101. he was an untouchable, they would find themselves...
102. doin' a little dance.
103. Moving with that music,
104. even if they hadn't danced in years.
105. They would find themselves...
106. looking across the crowd of people,
107. and making eyes at somebody,
108. even if they hadn't flirted in years.
109. And the gypsy would play and play and play and play..
110. and finally when the last note sung and hung in the air..
111. he would stop.
112. And there would be no applause.
113. But in recognition of his talent,
114. they would reluctantly reach into their pockets and they would grab

115. a few pennies that they had left, and they would throw it into the hat.
116. Gypsy would gather these up,
117. and he would take it and he would buy what he could,
118. a—a, a rough loaf of bread, some cheese,
119. and he would go and he would sit by the river,
120. and he would eat,
121. alone.
122. This was his life day after day, night after night,
123. this is what he did.
124. And there was somebody who admired the gypsy.
125. There was somebody who lived
126. below the river that the gypsy sat beside.
127. Below the layers of earth,
128. down,
129. deep..in the dark...
130. hot...
131. underworld.
132. There was someone down there..who liked to keep a fashionable set of horns on his head,
133. and a tail,
134. and he looked up at that gypsy,
135. he loved how that gypsy played.
136. And he watched the gypsy for many years.
137. And I don't think this happens to you here..
138. in Utah.
139. But when you're not..
140. talked to,
141. when you're not seen,
142. when you don't have friendship,
143. or conversation or even recognition on the street,
144. I say that because you're such a big community I can't imagine that happening here,
145. but that gypsy was never spoken to.
146. And the loneliness that crawled inside his heart,
147. and his bones...
148. it turned into melancholy.
149. And the melancholy was making its way down into a deep depression as he sat by his river
one night,
150. with his bread..and his cheese,
151. and the devil looked up,
152. and the devil saw the depression,
153. and he saw opportunity.

154. And so he took himself,
155. and when the gypsy stood up...
156. he noticed that there was a tall, handsome man
157. in a green velvet cloak.
158. And the handsome man looked at the gypsy and said "Good evening, gypsy."
159. And the gypsy said,
160. "Good evening?"
161. And the tall handsome man said, "eh,
162. I'd like to make a bet with you would you be up for making a bet with me? You'd be a very
rich man if you won."
163. And the gypsy said,
164. "I'll make a bet with you but I won't bet my soul.
165. I know with whom I'm dealing."
166. And the handsome man took off his hat showed his horns and he said,
167. "You're smart, gypsy. You're smart.
168. No, I'm not looking for your soul, it's much simpler than that.
169. I just want your fiddle.
170. I will give you *unlimited wealth*...
171. if you give me your fiddle."
172. Gypsy thought about this for a moment...
173. "I'd like to see the unlimited wealth first."
174. "Ah, you're clever, gypsy. You're clever.
175. Of course I'll show you,"
176. and he took his cloak and he wrapped it around the gypsy and when he pulled the cloak
away they were standing
177. in front of a waterfall,
178. but it wasn't water falling,
179. it was pieces of gold.
180. Devil said, "Take one piece, put it in your pocket.
181. Every time you remove that from your pocket,
182. there will be another piece."
183. Gypsy said "all right."
184. Devil said "Now,
185. your fiddle?"
186. Gypsy reached in,
187. unwrapped
188. the fiddle..that had been his only companion,
189. and he was just about to hand it over,
190. and he said,
191. "Wait.

192. I just wanna,
193. just wanna say goodbye...
194. to my fiddle.”
195. And the devil said,
196. “You sentimental old fool!
197. Go on, say goodbye.”
198. So the gypsy took the fiddle...
199. up to his lips,
200. and he..
201. *gesture and kissing sounds*
202. (laughter)
203. “All right, I’m done.”
204. (Laughter)
205. “Devil took it, he wiped the strings clean.”
206. (Laughter)
207. And he said “It was nice doing business with you,” and he was gone.
208. Gypsy,
209. more alone than ever, he reached down, he took
210. one little piece of gold.
211. Put it in his pocket...
212. and he made his way back,
213. back to that river.
214. And the devil was excited, because he had always wanted to play music; he’d seen the
gypsy do it many times.
215. And now all he needed to do was pick a place,
216. he needed to pick a place anywhere in Europe,
217. he needed to pick a city,
218. where he could find people in a tavern,
219. needed to pick any city in Europe...
220. (Audience yells out names of cities.)
221. Dublin, why not. Start with the Irish.
222. So!
223. (Laughter)
224. There he was on the cobblestone streets of Temple Bar and you could hear the Irish in
every single pub nearby,
225. you know what we’re like.
226. (Laughter)
227. He could hear the music, and he could hear the dancing, and then he could hear the
fighting, and the arguing, and the philosophy, and the jokes, and all the things and the
stories that happen.

228. And then it was getting later.
229. And later, and the devil was excited,
230. he got the fiddle out, he warmed it up, he'd seen the gypsy do this many times..
231. and then the doors started to heave,
232. and press,
233. and the Irish
234. *burst*
235. from the tavern.
236. And the devil was ready,
237. and he picked up the bow,
238. and he moved it across the strings, and...
239. *screaching sound effect*
240. So he tried again.
241. *screaching sound effect*
242. And this sound, I won't do it again, 'cause it hurts your ears;
243. it's like a cat being tortured.
244. (Laughter)
245. And the Irish,
246. connoisseurs of great music, they fled.
247. Didn't throw a penny.
248. Devil thought he was just, he was just, he needed practice. So he spent the day practicing,
249. and then he picked another city, anywhere in Europe. He picked. . .
250. (Audience yells city names)
251. Londo:n.
252. Of course he did.
253. By the great wide River Thames.
254. And he was waiting for the English, who of course
255. comport themselves
256. much more politely than the Irish.
257. (Laughter)
258. There was..
259. no singing.
260. There was no arguing,
261. there was just gentle discussion going on in all of their taverns.
262. (Laughter)
263. And the doors weren't heaving,
264. they were politely opened by somebody who worked there,
265. and everybody filed out.
266. (Laughter)
267. In a—in an orderly queue,

268. to go home.
269. (Laughter)
270. It's so true.
271. (Laughter)
272. And as they were filing out to go home, the devil saw his opportunity,
273. so he took up the fiddle,
274. and he pulled it across the strings,
275. and you know the sound it made, are you ready?
276. To make that sound for me?
277. Go.
278. (Audience screeches)
279. Ooh! The English were horrified!
280. They were horrified!
281. But they don't express emotion, so they just sort of went, "Oo!"
282. (Laughter)
283. Devil didn't get a penny.
284. So now he needed another city, he thought, "It always works in the stories, three times the charm, I need another city anywhere in Europe. . .
285. (Audience shouts out city names)
286. *laugh* I didn't hear any of that.
287. (Audience shouts out city names)
288. Paris! Ah oui,
289. *in French accent* Paris.
290. Ah oui, c'est ca!
291. The most fantastic city, uh, in all of Europe, uh?
292. This is how I speak French.
293. (Laughter)
294. So in Paris, of course, they are ablaze, they have their wine and their bread and their cheese, and the devil—
295. *dropping French accent*: I'll just stop doing that now.
296. (Laughter)
297. The devil was waiting
298. for the Parisiens.
299. Of course, everywhere they went, they were immaculately dressed,
300. and they walked,
301. knowing they had the greatest style in the world.
302. And they weren't taverns, they were beautifully
303. Baroque..bars and,
304. finally the doors swung open,
305. and the Parisiens sauntered out...

306. (Laughter)
307. To go home and watch their French movies, or something...
308. (Laughter)
309. And the devil saw his opportunity, he picked up the fiddle, and he pulled the bow across the strings,
310. and of course, the sound was—
311. (Audience screeches)
312. Oh mon dieu!
313. Sacre bleu, c'est terrible!
314. (Laughter)
315. And they spat their words at him, and they
316. and they spat at him,
317. and they ran off.
318. Three times,
319. he had tried three times, the devil had failed.
320. The devil doesn't usually fail like that, he knew the gypsy had done somethin'.
321. And with his all-seeing mind he knew where the gypsy was, he found him by that river.
322. And he walked up and the gypsy was sitting there,
323. and yeah he was still alone, but now he had much better food,
324. 'cause he had all that gold, you know.
325. So he had a four-course meal there by the river.
326. And the devil said, "What did you do?
327. What did you do gypsy?
328. I know you did something."
329. Gypsy said, "Well,
330. I could tell you, but the deal would be..
331. you have to give me back my fiddle first."
332. Devil said "All right,
333. all right."
334. Took the fiddle,
335. and he handed it back to the gypsy.
336. And the gypsy said "Well devil, you know,
337. you know when I said goodbye to it,
338. yeah? You remember when I..pulled it up to my lips,
339. do you know what I did?
340. I sucked out my soul.
341. Because that's where it lives.
342. Under the strings of my fiddle.
343. And you can't play music if you don't have a soul.
344. And the devil said,

345. “You’re smart, gypsy.
346. You’re smart, I like you.
347. Keep the fiddle.
348. Keep playing,
349. ‘cause every time you play,
350. people sin.
351. And every time they sin,
352. they end up at my door—anyway.
353. (Laughter)
354. (Applause)
355. Now, I’m not here,
356. I’m not here to put thoughts in your head,
357. *you* decide where Bil Lepp inspired me in that story.
358. (Laughter)
359. It’s totally up to you.
360. (Bil: “Tall and handsome.”)
361. *Laughs* “Tall and handsome.”
362. Uhh...however you want to interpret it, it’s—it’s fine.
363. (Laughter)

The Sound of Money

1. So once,
2. a long long time ago in the far far east where the
3. air smells of cinnamon and cardamom and honey and almonds,
4. there lived..
5. a very... *poor* student.
6. And maybe most of you have been students, and you remember what it was like, and how you had to
7. eek a living out of those few dollars you had every week to make the food you needed to eat—well this student was so poor,
8. he spent all of his money
9. on his books.
10. And he lived in a *tiny* room.
11. And the room was right above a falafel shop.
12. And the smell—it was the best falafel in all of that town—
13. and this poor student,
14. he only had money for his books.
15. And all he could afford to buy..
16. was pita bread.

17. That was it.
18. So what he would do every day,
19. after he finished studying,
20. he would take the little piece of bread he had for that day,
21. he would sit by the window,
22. he would rip the bread slowly,
23. trying to make it last,
24. and he would lean out the window,
25. and the smell of falafel
26. would be wafting up through the air.
27. And he would *sniffs long*
28. *sniffs again*
29. And this is how he would eat and,
30. and, and the bread always tasted of falafel!
31. It was wonderful!
32. And it gave him a little sense that he was eating more than bread!
33. So one day he was doing this and he was taking his time *sniff*
34. when the owner of the falafel shop stepped outside.
35. The owner of the falafel shop looked up,
36. sa:w his tenant,
37. the student,
38. leaning out the window.
39. Said,
40. “Hey!.. What are you doing?”
41. And the student went *slurp* “Nothing!
42. Nothing.”
43. He said, “Were you smelling?”
44. (Laughter)
45. “Were you smelling my falafel?”
46. And the student,
47. still *chewing sounds*
48. chewing *chewing sounds*
49. the pita bread, he said, “W-well, well...yes?”
50. And the falafel shop owner *sharp inhale*,
51. he got all big with a sense of injustice and he looked up and he said,
52. “Thief!”
53. The student said “What?”
54. He said, “Thief!
55. You are stealing the smell of my f—I work hard to make this falafel!
56. And you just sit up there and you take it..

57. with your nose!”
58. (Laughter)
59. “I’m taking you to court!”
60. The student said “You cannot be serious.” He said, “I am serious, come downstairs.”
61. So the student. . . ate the last piece of bread, and he came down the stairs, *inhale*
62. and the falafel shop owner took the student,
63. and he dragged him down,
64. and he sat him in front of a judge.
65. Waited for their turn, and the judge said “What is the business?”
66. “*This* young man is a thief!
67. He rents the room above my shop, and every day, I have found out today—
68. he leans out a window,
69. and he steals the smell
70. of my falafel.
71. And I will not stand for it,
72. and I will have justice!”
73. The judge said “Hmm..
74. I see.”
75. And he looked at the young man and he said “Young man, what do you have to say for yourself?”..
76. “Uh, it’s—it’s true, I rent, I rent the room ab—above the shop.
77. And..it’s true that I lean out the window...
78. and I, I s—I suppose I do..
79. I do smell the air but ah..
80. I’m just trying to eat my bread!”
81. The judge said, “I see, I see.
82. It’s a difficult case. ...
83. Right, because I’m incredibly smart, I figured it out very quickly, I know what to do.
84. (Laughter)
85. It is true..
86. this young man
87. is a thief.”
88. And the falafel shop owner said “See!
89. I told you.”
90. And the student said “But, but—“
91. Judge said “Wait!”
92. Looked at the student; he said,
93. “How much money do you have in your pocket?”
94. “I (*sigh*),
95. I just have,

96. I have two pennies.”
97. “Right.
98. Drop the pennies
99. from one hand into the other.”
100. *Gesture*
101. And as they fell,
102. they made a little sound.
103. And the judge said “Very good.”
104. And he looked at the falafel shop owner and he said, “You’ve been paid.”
105. (Laughter)
106. Falafel shop owner said “What?! What?!”
107. Because he wasn’t as clever as you, he didn’t figure it out.
108. (Laughter)
109. And the judge said,
110. “Well, if we’re gonna charge him
111. with stealing a smell
112. he can pay
113. with the sound
114. of money.”
115. (Laughter and applause)

Chopsticks

1. So I—I just wanna tell one little short story,
2. that is
3. truly inspired
4. by Mr. Lepp.
5. (Laughter)
6. There are, there are, it’s a—it’s a strange thing, these—these festivals.
7. You get together,
8. and you know everybody here, don’t you.
9. A lot of you,
10. this is your community you come together once a year,
11. and it’s the same for us.
12. We get together at these festivals around the world,
13. and you see these friends maybe once a year, maybe once every couple of years.
14. And we come in, and we have the strangest conversations
15. around the kitchen table.
16. Or right before we go onstage.
17. And we’re always talking about the same thing, and I watched Bil

18. tell his
19. skunk story last night, how many of you saw that?
20. (Laughter and applause)
21. And uh, and I watched Kevin
22. tell his marathon story last night, did you see that?
23. *Whew*
24. And uh, it was the, it was the food I needed
25. to find all the stories I would bring
26. to you
27. for this weekend.
28. So once,
29. long long ago, there were two best friends,
30. and they were born the same week.
31. They were born on the same street.
32. They grew up playing
33. together.
34. And as they got older, they actually both fell in love
35. with two women at the same time,
36. and they both got married the same time, and both their wives got pregnant roughly around
the same time,
37. it was just one of those things.
38. And they were the kind of best friends,
39. they just talked about *everything*.
40. And they were getting' on in life,
41. these two men.
42. And one came to the other's table, and he sat down and he said,
43. "You know what, Tom?
44. We're getting' old.
45. And...I've known ya every day of my life.
46. And...I don't know
47. where we go when we die,
48. but, I have a feeling that you've led a *much* better life than me.
49. You know, I've got in all kinds of trouble..there's all that stuff I did when I was a teenager,
you remember..."
50. Tom said "Yeah, yeah, I remember, Bil, I remember."
51. (Scattered laughter)
52. He said, "Well..."
53. (Laughter builds slowly)
54. He said, "I think Tom, I think you're gonna go somewhere I'm not gonna go, and,
55. you know what, I know we'll be separated, and that's just how it goes..."

56. but,
57. I'd love to know where you go.
58. Do you think, somehow, our two souls,
59. do you *think*..
60. we could *find* a way..
61. to meet?"
62. Tom said "Yeah.
63. You know what, if anyone could do it,
64. friends as long as us, friends as good as us,
65. maybe we could, you know?
66. Maybe you and I could meet wherever we go,
67. and tell each other what it's like."
68. *spit, spit*
69. And they shook.
70. And they lived the rest of their lives, and they actually died..
71. pretty close to the same time.
72. And Tom's soul and Bil's soul wandered around out there in that place we can only
 imagine.
73. And they wandered for a while in their own spheres and they *finally* found each other.
74. Tom said "Bil!"
75. Bil said "Tom! It's you!
76. Hard to recognize you without the body, but you're looking good!"
77. And Bil said, you know, "So?"
78. Tom said, "So, you tell me first. Did you end up
79. where we thought you were gonna end up?"
80. Bil said "Yeah."
81. (Laughter)
82. "Yeah, I did, I uh, yeah.
83. Yeah."
84. Tom said "Well what's it like?"
85. Bil said "You know what?
86. It's *really* beautiful.
87. There are these epically—epically beautiful mountains, these sunsets that go on forever,
88. we all live in this great big house."
89. Tom said "That sounds pretty good—"
90. He said, "Yeah, yeah we live in this big house.
91. An'—and every night we come down,
92. and there's this *bi:g hu:ge* long table seems to stretch on forever, and everybody's there.
93. We all sit around this table

94. and there's every kind of delicious food that's ever been invented and some I couldn't have even dreamed of."

95. Tom said "Sounds amazing!

96. I wasn't expecting that from you know, down there."

97. Bil said "Yeah, but there's a problem."

98. "What's that?"

99. "Well...down there where we sit at that table,

100. there are these 10. Foot. Long. Chopsticks!

101. And..we are not

102. physically able to eat the food.

103. If we try and reach it with our hands it disappears, but—

104. we have to eat it with the chops—have you ever tried to eat with ten-foot-long chopsticks?

105. It's incredibly difficult!

106. So every night we sit there in front of a feast, and every night we starve.

107. And that's where I am.

108. So anyway enough about me, how about you."

109. Tom said, "Well, (whoo)

110. where I went, you know, you—

111. you know where I went,

112. and...the mountains—beautiful, epic vistas,

113. sunsets and sunrises that just stretch on forever!

114. We live in a big house as well?

115. All of us,

116. and there's a big, long table,

117. and every kind of food imaginable, it sounds really similar you know, every kind of food imaginable,

118. we all sit there at the table,

119. and you know what else?

120. *We* have 10-foot-long chopsticks as well!"

121. Bil said "No!

122. That is *terrible*!

123. So you're *starving*!"

124. Tom said "No."

125. He said "No?"

126. "Well no, because

127. you know where I ended up,

128. we take those 10-foot-long chopsticks,

129. and we feed

130. each other."

131. So here at this festival,

132. may the stories be food for your souls.
133. And take these with you.
134. Thank you.
135. (Applause)

Meat of the Tongue

1. Hello.
2. (Hello!)
3. Oh, I've seen you before, how are ya?
4. (Whistle)
5. You might recognize me from my..previous life as a guitar stand.
6. (Laughter)
That was my first time being a guitar stand.
7. Did I do all right?
8. (Cheering)
9. So how many of you have I met before?
10. (Cheering)
11. I thought I recognized you,
12. it's good to see you again.
13. Hello, hello, good to see you.
14. So, um, you know I don't like holding on to microphones, but I'll do my best with this one.
15. And uh,
16. you might have noticed **whispered* there's a man over there.*
17. (Murmurs and laughter)
18. **Whispered** I mean you, Jim, I mean you.
19. (Laughter)
20. Are, are you gonna stay all the way over there?
21. Just that...
22. you just feel so far away.
23. (Laughter)
24. We're gonna be working together here,
25. so...
26. All right, I, ok,
27. I'll just deal with the separation anxiety.
28. I'm anxious.
29. (Laughter)
30. All right, so...
31. (Laughter, building into applause and cheering)
32. (Laughter)

33. Um...
34. (Laughter)
35. *Whispered* Good luck.
36. (Laughter)
37. Said he's a bit of a dancer, let's see what happens.
38. (Laughter)
39. (Clare laughs)
40. (Laughter, building into applause, as Bil Lepp does something near the stage)
41. Thanks, Bil!
42. 'ts really kind of you.
43. It's really kind of you to do that,
44. just now in front of the biggest audience, that's lovely.
45. (Laughter)
46. (Bil response, laughter from Clare)
47. So,
48. on with the story.
49. Sorry, so enough of this silliness.
50. He went away again, what's going on?
51. (Laughter)
52. Because he's a very important part of this stage,
53. he's a very important part of the storytelling festival,
54. he's doing very hard work.
55. (Applause, cheering)
56. And if he stays over there,
57. he'll be invisible,
58. and I'd much rather play with him during the story as well.
59. (Laughter)
60. So,
61. once, a long long long time ago
62. in a country far far away from here,
63. fa:r to the east,
64. where it is hot,
65. and where it smells of,
66. of cinnamon,
67. and chocolate,
68. and almonds..
69. there was a king.
70. And this king was a *big*,
71. *strong*,
72. *beautiful* man. *Interpreter gestures*

73. (Laughter)
74. That's what I'm talking about. *sharp inhale*
75. He was a very powerful king.
76. And this king,
77. he had a, he had a very big army.
78. And what he enjoyed doing mostly,
79. as king,
80. was..was really living in that power.
81. He would take his armies,
82. and he would go out,
83. and he would conquer other kingdoms.
84. And then when he was done he would come back.
85. To his throne.
86. To his palace.
87. But the more he traveled,
88. the more he conquered other kingdoms,
89. the more he saw that
90. every other king had one thing that he didn't have.
91. Every other king..
92. had a queen.
93. So,
94. one day he decided if he was going to be the best king in all of the world he would need a queen.
95. And of course,
96. looking the way that he did... *Interpreter gestures*
97. (Laughter, cheering)
98. He would need the. Most. Beautiful woman in the world. *Interpreter gestures*
99. (Cheering, applause)
100. But he was a king and he didn't have to do such work himself,
101. he just sent his counselors out to do it for him.
102. And so they did, they went out and they searched,
103. land after land, people after people,
104. until they found a woman that was
105. —ah—well, she was sort of,
106. “vwh,” “vwh,” “vwh”. *Interpreter gestures*
107. (laughter, cheering)
108. *Clare laughs*
109. She had the long, jet-black hair,
110. smoldering almond-shaped eyes,
111. the color of dark chocolate. *Interpreter gestures*

112. (Laughs)
113. Skin as luminous as moonlight. *Interpreter gestures*
114. (Scattered laughter)
115. She was perfect.
116. King didn't need to know anything else about her,
117. she—looked—good standing beside him,
118. and that was all he needed to know.
119. So they were married.
120. And then the king had a queen and life was good.
121. But he soon grew tired of domestic bliss.
122. He soon decided it was time to take those big armies and go back out into the world.
123. So he left his wife there in the palace and out he went.
124. And he was gone for week,
125. after week,
126. after week,
127. after week, and he finally came back to the palace,
128. and he made his way up to their rooms,
129. and he walked
130. down the hall, and he saw his wife coming towards him.
131. But she looked...
132. she looked kind of...
133. skinnier.
134. You know, she was a proper woman, she was a woman,
135. when he met her.
136. And now she was a little bit more...
137. And he looked at her, her hair wasn't quite as lustrous,
138. you know, and he said, "Is, is uh, is
139. something wrong?"
140. And she said, "No.
141. Everything's.. *fine*."
142. (Laughter)
143. Yes, you know, don't you?
144. (Laughter)
145. You know our secret code!
146. (Laughter)
147. It's not a very complex code.
148. But it is a blatant lie.
149. (Laughter)
150. So.
151. He said, "Are you sure?" and she said, "Mmhm!"

152. (Laughter)
153. And they went off and they had dinner,
154. but you know, he wasn't really a man for domestic bliss,
155. he didn't spend any time at the dinner table,
156. and the next morning he went off on another one of his conquering adventures,
157. to take more people,
158. more land,
159. more money, and when he came back a month later,
160. he walked
161. *past* his wife in the hall.
162. And then he turned and he looked back,
163. and he said "Uh, uh, oh, it's you!"
164. But now she was...fwt...
165. almost like you know, like a Hollywood
166. star, or sum'm.
167. (Laughter)
168. Very *choked sucking sound* skinny.
169. And, you know, the hair was s-, there was jus', there was no shine in the eyes,
170. there was no sparkle.
171. And he said, "Uh, -s, is everything all right?" and she said,
172. "Uh huh!
173. I'm fine."
174. And he thought "No, uhhhh, maybe she's lying.
175. Maybe she's lying.
176. So he went and got a,
177. a la:rg bracelet, and he got a big dress made of jewels, and he left them on her bed,
178. and she found them and,
179. "Mm. Lovely."
180. They went and had dinner together,
181. and that was that.
182. The king was one of these kings who liked to dress up as a regular person,
183. he liked to disguise himself and slip out into the village,
184. near his
185. castle,
186. and find out if anybody was planning a coup.
187. He used to
188. hang out in the marketplace
189. and listen in to the whispers.
190. And he thought he did a very good job of disguising himself.
191. He wrapped himself in a great big cloak,

192. and he went down to the marketplace.
193. *Whispered* Everyone knew it was him.
194. (Laughter)
195. But they pretended they didn't, because he liked to play this little game.
196. So, there he was in the marketplace one day, and he was,
197. stood there,
198. nonchalantly,
199. leaning against one of the stalls,
200. and there was this sudden hush...
201. all through the market,
202. and every man in the market
203. turned...
204. and looked.
205. And so the king turned...
206. and looked.
207. And coming through the market,
208. was a woman
209. *whispered* *so*
210. *beautiful*. *whispered*
211. She was, "vwh" "vwh" "sh sh sh" "vwm" "vwm" "ph!"
212. (Laughter) *Interpreter gesture*
213. (Further laughter)
214. And every man there watched
215. *whispered* as she walked by.
216. And she just bounced
217. their glances off her hips.
218. (Laughter)
219. The king was very interested in where she was going, who she was,
220. who was she married to?
221. And so he watched as she walked through the marketplace,
222. and into a tiny little..
223. shack.
224. Very poor-looking house.
225. And so the king needed to know...
226. who was gonna go into that shack?
227. So he waited.
228. And the market began to close down for the day.
229. And the last man to leave the market..
230. was the fishmonger.
231. The fishmonger, little pot-belly,

232. he was lil' bit bald,
233. and he stank of fish,
234. and he made his way down
235. to the little shack,
236. and before he had reached for the door,
237. the beautiful woman opened it,
238. she reached out,
239. she grabbed her husband and,
240. *kissing noises* *interpreter gesture*
241. (Laughter and cheering)
242. (Applause)
243. Yes! She pulled him inside that house!
244. (Laughter)
245. The king was very interested in, in what was gonna happen next,
246. he went up and he knocked on the door.
247. And the, the fishmonger opened the door and dropped to his knees and said "Your Highness."
248. And the king said,
249. "How did you recognize me?"
250. (Laughter)
251. Fishmonger said..
252. "Lucky guess?"
253. He said, "Listen listen, I just need to know, is that your wife?"
254. Fishmonger said, "Y-, yes that's my wife."
255. "Well I need to know just one thing, just tell me one thing—
256. *what do you feed her?*"
257. (Laughter)
258. Fishmonger said "What?"
259. "Yeah, what do you feed her?"
260. The fishmonger said "Oh.
261. I feed her
262. meat
263. of the tongue."
264. King said, "Tongue meat,
265. yeah?
266. All right, thanks."
267. And he went up to the palace.
268. And he went up to the chef, and he said,
269. "Tongue meat.
270. Do you know how to cook it?"

271. “Yes?”
272. “Well get every kind of tongue meat—
273. no one else is allowed to have it—own it all for the palace.
274. And you need to kick, cook only tongue meat..
275. for the queen. Yeah?”
276. Next day, the chef had gotten cow tongue.
277. Pig tongue.
278. Sheep tongue.
279. Dog tongue.
280. Cat tongue.
281. Snake tongue.
282. (Scattered laughter)
283. And even the most delicate of all tongues, the hardest to get...
284. chicken tongue.
285. (Laughter)
286. And he had sautéed and braised it and barbecued and baked it and boiled it and put it in a
soup and he served all of the different tongues to the queen,
287. and the queen looked at her breakfast plate and she said “Ah!
288. What did I do wrong?”
289. (Laughter)
290. King said, “No no it’s good for you, it’s good for you, eat it.”
291. And she looked..and she..took a..bite.
292. *Chewing sounds*
293. Ten minutes, one bite.
294. *Chewing sounds*
295. (Laughter)
296. It was all she could manage.
297. That’s all she was fed, three times a day for a week.
298. She lost even more weight.
299. And finally the king was just, he was just done.
300. He went down to the fishmonger, he said “Listen, that thing with the tongue meat, didn’t
work.
301. So,
302. I have an idea. Uh...we’re gonna swap.
303. I’ll have your wife and you’ll have mine.”
304. It was the original Wife Swap, I believe they made a TV show about it later.
305. (Laughter)
306. And listen, the thing is, when the king decrees something, in this land, you don’t disagree
or you lose your head.
307. And the fishmonger looked at his wife and his wife had tears in her eyes and...

308. she just shook her head ever so slightly, tell him not to protest.
309. She went with the king.
310. And the fishmonger went to work.
311. And he knew,
312. that when he got back from work,
313. the *queen* was gonna be in his house.
314. So when he finished he packed up,
315. he stank of fish,
316. he walked home,
317. he opened the door,
318. *whispered* and the queen...
319. was on the couch.
320. Sat there. *whispered*
321. And normally with his own wife, you know, they'd be kissing by now, but like, that'd be
too strange, and
322. she didn't know him, an'
323. he went over and he decided to scrub himself.
324. He'd never scrubbed himself that much with his wife,
325. she didn't mind the smell of fish.
326. He *scrubbed* himself as much as he could, he put on a clean shirt.
327. And then,
328. and then he felt really awkward.
329. And the queen looked very uncomfortable.
330. And the fishmonger just, he just
331. sat on the edge of the couch,
332. he decided to do what he always did with his own wife, he just sat there and he said,
333. "Do you know what I heard at the market today?"
334. "What?"
335. "Well, you know the rumor about the blacksmith and the baker's wife?"
336. *whispered* *It's true.*"
337. Queen said "What?"
338. He said, "Yeah! *whispered*
339. And you know what else?"
340. And he told her all the gossip from the market.
341. And she delighted in it!
342. And then when he ran out of gossip,
343. he started telling her jokes.
344. And when he ran out of jokes he started telling her stories.
345. And when he ran out of stories,
346. he pulled out his mandolin,

347. he wasn't as good...
348. as Josh and David,
349. but
350. he played...
351. (Laughter)
352. As well as he could.
353. And he sang her songs.
354. And that was how they spent the night.
355. Meanwhile, back at the palace...
356. things were not going so well.
357. In fact, after a week with this new wife,
358. *she* was losing weight.
359. The fishmonger's wife, the beautiful, "vw," "vw," "za!" "ph," "ck!"
360. Losing weight.
361. (Laughter)
362. Losing the lustre in her skin, losing it all,
363. and the king thought "Better the devil you know."
364. He decided he would go back and he would get his own queen back.
365. And he went down to the fishmonger's house..
366. and he heard something coming from inside—
367. he looked in the window before he knocked,
368. and th—he saw a woman.
369. And she was singing,
370. and she was dancing,
371. and she was cleaning the dishes, singing away,
372. and he thought, "*whispered* Wow!"
373. She looked beautiful, she looked happy,
374. and then she turned...
375. it was the queen.
376. And so he—
377. *knocking*
378. And the queen,
379. just humming away to herself,
380. she got over to the door,
381. expecting the fishmonger, *breathing like she's been dancing*
382. she opened the door, and she said,
383. "Oh. It's you."
384. (Laughter)
385. He said, "Yeah,
386. yeah,

387. yeah,
388. it's me!
389. It's me, and I need to know one thing! One thing.
390. What is he doing that I'm not doing?"
391. She said "Do you really want to know?"
392. He said "Yeah."
393. She said "Every night when he comes home,
394. he sits down,
395. and we talk.
396. He tells me *stories*.
397. He sings me songs."
398. And the king looked at his wife,
399. and he finally understood,
400. what the fishmonger meant,
401. when he said that he fed his wife
402. "meat..
403. of the tongue."
404. (Applause)

Jay Bird, Monkey Heart

1. Hello!
2. ("Hello.")
3. How are you?
4. ("Good.")
5. Everyone please, stand up.
6. Take your hands,
7. wiggle 'em.
8. Now,
9. I'm gonna show you what to do with the other part of yourself, but you don't have to turn
around, you just need to take your bum,
10. and you're gonna wiggle it like this.
11. Go on, wiggle it.
12. You've been sittin' for ages!
13. (Laughter)
14. Wiggle your bums.
15. Good wiggle.
16. It's ok, no one's looking at you.
17. (Laughter)
18. And sit back down.

19. *Sigh* Now.
20. Can you hear me all right?
21. Yeah?
22. I don't like those microphones, they get in my way, 'cause you know I like to move.
23. So you look very intelligent,
24. are you very intelligent?
25. (Responses)
26. All right.
27. Repeat after me:
28. Way down yonder.
29. (Repeat)
30. Not so very far off.
31. (Repeat)
32. So we'll do that all together:
33. Way down yonder not so very far off,
34. (Repeat)
35. A jay bird died of a whooping cough.
36. (Repeat)
37. And he whooped so loud with his whooping cough,
38. (Repeat)
39. That he whooped his head and tail right off.
40. (Repeat)
41. So I'm gonna show that, what it's like, all together,
42. I'll do it once and then you repeat after me.
43. Way down yonder not so very far off,
44. A jay bird died of a whooping cough.
45. And he *whooped* so loud with his *whooping* cough
46. that he whooped his head and tail right off.
47. (Repeat)
48. Great, so that's the song,
49. which you obviously got like that *snap*, 'cause you're very smart,
50. now, there's an action to go with,
51. but
52. because you're very intelligent you'll get it.
53. Take your two hands,
54. do this: *clap*
55. (claps)
56. Do this: *slap*
57. *slaps*
58. Ok that's the *laugh* entirety of the action.

59. It's very difficult.
60. (Scattered laughter)
61. So it goes,
62. ... (*Slowly, with sounds of clapping and slapping:*)
63. Way
64. down
65. yonder
66. not so
67. very
68. far
69. off,
70. A jay
71. bird
72. died
73. of a
74. *whooping*—
75. Yeah, there's a little trick,
76. every time you say "whoop"
77. your hands have to go by your ears.
78. So.
79. I didn't wanna tell you that at the beginning 'cause it sounds more complicated then.
80. All right you're ready, so we'll start again.
81. So every time we say "whoop,"
82. your hands go up by your ears.
83. So we'll start at the beginning. (*Slowly, with sounds of clapping and slapping:*)
84. Way
85. down
86. yonder
87. not so
88. very
89. far
90. off,
91. A jay
92. bird
93. died
94. of a
95. *whoop*
96. ing
97. cough.
98. And he

99. *whooped*
100. so
101. loud
102. with his
103. *whoop*
104. ing
105. cough
106. that he
107. *whooped*
108. his
109. head
110. and
111. tail
112. right
113. off.
114. (Scattered laughter)
115. Yeah...we had some extra whoopers in there.
116. (Scattered laughter)
117. So, that was your warm-up.
118. (Scattered laughter)
119. Can we go faster?
120. (Responses)
121. I've done this all over the world,
122. and I'm just letting you know, I'm comparing you to other countries.
123. (Laughter)
124. So.
125. Here we go!
126. You ready? (*Faster, with clapping and slapping sounds*:)
127. Way down yonder not so very far off,
128. A jay bird died of a *whooping* cough.
129. And he whooped so loud with his *whooping* cough
130. that he *whooped* his head and tail right off.
131. Whoo!
132. There was only like three extra whoopers.
133. That's impressive.
134. Ok.
135. Faster?
136. Yes?
137. Ready?
138. Go.

139. (*Repeat rhyme faster, with clapping and slapping*)
140. Extra whooper over there.
141. (Laughter)
142. But this main body right here,
143. I've never seen people go so fast,
144. so let's go a little faster?
145. (Yeah!)
146. Ok.
147. (*Repeat rhyme very fast, with clapping and slapping*)
148. Amazing.
149. Amazing.
150. (Applause)
151. So...
152. *Sigh* What'll I tell ya?
153. All kinds 'a stories racin' around in my head, arguing with each other which one wants to be told.
154. Let me see...
155. Let me...
156. (Comment from audience member)
157. ha ha ha.
158. I'm not a DJ,
159. I don't take requests.
160. (Laughter)
161. I was, I was having a conversation with *myself* about what stories to tell.
162. (Laughter)
163. Don't point, that's rude.
164. Don't point!
165. (Laughter)
166. Now, there was a heckler,
167. there's always one, they say in Ireland.
168. There's always one.
169. So, um, can you make the sound that the sun makes when it's really hot?
170. (Hissing)
171. In Ireland they never know what to do when I ask that.
172. (Laughter)
173. We don't know what it sounds like.
174. Ok. So. Uh, you're gonna be the sun over here,
175. so nice and hot, sun.
176. (Hissing)
177. Good.

178. Ok, in the middle,
179. can I hear the sound of the river flowing.
180. (Whooshing)
181. (Laughs) Ok.
182. Uh, let's try that again.
183. (Shhhhhh)
184. There's some "whoo" in the river.
185. I like it.
186. Ok.
187. And over here can I get the sound that the people make,
188. when it's really really hot, you know and it's so hot,
189. and the people, they sigh.
190. (Sigh)
191. All right, sunshine:
192. (Hissing)
193. River:
194. (Shhhh)
195. Sighs:
196. (sighs)
197. (all three as she conducts)
198. (again)(audible sobbing heard with the sighing)
199. No, no, not *dying*.
200. (Laughter)
201. *Sighing*.
202. I know they rhyme, but...
203. (Laughter)
204. All right.
205. There's always one fatalist in every crowd.
206. So.
207. All right.
208. So sorry. *laughter*
209. Setting again.
210. We're going
211. to take the hair out of my mouth.
212. Doesn't help with storytelling.
213. We are going to India where it's really, really hot.
214. A long long long long time ago in India,
215. one day,
216. under the hot,
217. hot

218. sun
 219. (hissing)
 220. there was a bi:g, lo:ng, wi:de river
 221. (shhhh)
 222. and by the side of the river people washed their clothes and washed their babies,
 223. and as they washed their clothes and babies they sighed,
 224. (sighs)
 225. and in that great big river there lived a big,
 226. fat,
 227. green,
 228. crocodile.
 229. And he got up one day,
 230. and the sun was beating down,
 231. (hiss)
 232. river was flowing,
 233. (shhhh)
 234. people were sighing,
 235. (sighs)
 236. and the crocodile got into the river and he started to swim..
 237. down the river.
 238. Sun was so hot,
 239. (hiss)
 240. he needed somewhere cool,
 241. so as he swam down the river,
 242. he saw this hu:ge tree.
 243. And under the tree there was shade, and in the shade there was mud,
 244. and the mud would be nice and cool!
 245. So he swam towards that tree,
 246. and he stepped out,
 247. “ccchhlillp,
 248. chlillp.
 249. Chlp chlp.”
 250. And he started to waaaade down—chlp chlp chlp chlp—into that mud, chlp,
 251. it was going all over his belly.
 252. And just as he was starting to coo:l down
 253. he heard something.
 254. He heard,
 255. *character voice* “UMNUMNUMNUMNUMNUMNUMNUM scchhlillp!
 256. Oh it’s so good!”
 257. ...

258. But there was no one there.
259. So he continued
260. his little mud bath.
261. And then he heard it again.
262. “UMNUMNUMNUMNUM!
263. Oh it’s so good, it’s so delicious!”
264. ...
265. And up above him,
266. in the tree
267. there was a monkey.
268. And the monkey was sitting there,
269. and he was plucking apples from the tree.
270. And as he plucked the apples,
271. he would shove them into his mouth—
272. “HUMNUMNUMNUMNUM,
273. *slurp* UM,
274. *slurp* NUM,
275. oh it’s so good!”
276. And the crocodile was looking up the and monkey looked down and said,
277. “Oh, hello!”
278. “...Hello.”
279. And the monkey said, “How are you?”
280. Crocodile said “Uh, I’m...I’m fine?
281. How are you?”
282. “AH. ME?
283. I am *fantastic*.”
284. Crocodile said “Why?”
285. He said, “Oh because,
286. all I do is I sit all day up in this tree and I eat apples.”
287. And the crocodile said “Uh,
288. that’s nice.
289. I’ve never had an apple.”
290. “...*What?*...
291. (Laughter)
292. Are you for real?
293. *Never?*
294. But apples are..they’re the..they’re the best thing in the world!
295. It’s like, it’s like having honey just explode in your mou—
296. well, listen.
297. I could just describe it to you,

298. but why don't I give you an apple."
299. Crocodile said "Uh..all right."
300. So the monkey climbed up and he got the very best apple,
301. the ripest juiciest apple,
302. *click* plucked it and he said "All right,
303. open your mouth...
304. Go on.
305. Let's see ya,
306. there ya go."
307. All right. *Panting*
308. So.
309. The monkey took his best shot,
310. and threw it right at the crocodile's mouth, *shew!*"
311. (clap) And the crocodile crunched his huge teeth through that apple and the apple,
312. bah!
313. Exploded in a
314. delicious delight in his mouth,
315. and he said *slurp* "Oh it's,
316. it's delicious!"
317. And the monkey said, "I know!
318. And all I do every day is sit up in this tree and eat apples."
319. (Laughter)
320. And crocodile said "Well, pfft, wow.
321. All I do every day is I uh,
322. climb into the river and I swim."
323. And the monkey said, "I...You know how to *swim*?
324. That's *amazing*."
325. Crocodile said "Well,
326. yeah I...guess it's all right."
327. (Laughter)
328. And so the crocodile and the monkey, they talked, and they talked, and they talked,
329. and they passed the hottest part of the day together,
330. and when it got to the
331. end of the day the crocodile said "Well,
332. I better be going."
333. And the monkey said "*sigh* well,
334. goodbye my friend,
335. see ya again soon."
336. Crocodile said, "...Yeah!
337. Yeah...all right.

338. Bye my friend.”
339. And he got into the river and he swam home.
340. Got up the next day,
341. the sun was beating down,
342. (hiss)
343. river was flowing,
344. (shhhh)
345. people were sighing,
346. (sighs)
347. got out and got into the river, he was thinkin’ about his friend, h’ was thinkin’ about those apples,
348. so he swam down the river really fast,
349. saw the tree,
350. and the shade,
351. and the mud,
352. stepped out,
353. ccchhhlllp!
354. One..little foot into the mud and he heard,
355. “Hello, my friend!”
356. He looked up, there was the monkey.
357. The monkey said,
358. “You’re back, I’m so glad to see you,
359. would you like another apple?”
360. Crocodile said,
361. “Yeah, all right.”
362. So the crocodile opened his mouth,
363. and the monkey, pt!
364. “Ready?”
365. Whew!
366. (Audience claps)
367. Oh! And he bit down, it was so juicy and delicious,
368. and they began to talk,
369. and they told each other stories of their lives, and it was wonderful,
370. got to the end of the day,
371. and the crocodile said “Ooh,
372. it’s late!
373. I better be going, my wife doesn’t like it when I’m late.”
374. And the monkey said,
375. “You never told me you were married.”
376. Crocodile said “Yeah I’m married, is that a problem?”

377. (Scattered laughter)
378. He said, "No, no, not at all! But I mean,
379. if I had known that I mean,
380. maybe your wife would like some apples!"
381. Crocodile said "That is so kind,
382. thank you."
383. So the monkey crawled up,
384. and he found the four
385. best
386. apples and he said,
387. "All right, get ready!"
388. Pt! Pt! Pt! Pt!
389. And the crocodile, chk chk chk chk!
390. caught 'em on his back,
391. and he started getting' to the river,
392. and the monkey said "Goodbye my friend!"
393. And the crocodile said,
394. "See ya!"
395. And he started ta swim home.
396. And he got home, it was pretty late.
397. And he
398. got into his house and his wife was there.
399. (Laughter)
400. "You're late."
401. "I know,
402. I know,
403. I'm really sorry.
404. But!
405. I brought you a gift.
406. It's called...
407. an *apple*."
408. (Laugh)
409. "Try it, it's the most delicious thing in the world, it's like having honey
410. explode in your mouth,
411. try it."
412. And his wife
413. *gestures*
414. *sniff, sniff, crunch, chewing sound, crunch, crunch*
415. "This is delicious!"
416. "I know," he said.

417. "And I've got three more for ya."
418. And she said,
419. "Yeah it's delicious,
420. but it's an apple.
421. Apples, as I know,
422. grow on trees, how did you get an apple?"
423. And he said "Oh! Well, my friend the monkey
424. gave me the apples."
425. She said "What?"
426. "My friend the monkey, h—he, he gave me the apples,
427. he picked them from the tree, threw them down."
428. "You mean to say...
429. you know a monkey,
430. that eats these apples?"
431. He said "yeah?"
432. She... "You know if these apples taste this good, I bet that monkey
433. would taste even better.
434. And the best part of any monkey
435. is his heart.
436. I wanna taste that monkey's heart tomorrow night for dinner!"
437. And the crocodile said, "No, no... *laugh* n—no, I don't think you...heard what I said, I
said 'my, my friend, the monkey.'"
438. And she said "Your *friend*,
439. your *friend*—
440. you're a crocodile,
441. he's a monkey.
442. And besides which,
443. I am your wife.
444. If I tell you I want the monkey's heart tomorrow night for dinner,
445. that is what you bring me,
446. you do not bring it,
447. do not bother coming home."
448. So the crocodile got up the next day...
449. wanted to make his wife happy.
450. Got up, the sun was shining,
451. (hiss)
452. river was flowing,
453. (rush)
454. people were sighing,
455. (sigh)

456. and the sighs were as heavy as the heart of the crocodile
457. because he knew what he had to do, he had to betray his friend.
458. Swam down the river.
459. But his heart wasn't really in it.
460. ...
461. Took a long time.
462. Finally saw the tree,
463. saw the shade,
464. saw the mud,
465. stepped into the mud, ccchlllp!
466. The voice from above—"Hello, my friend, how are ya?"
467. "Hi."
468. He said, the monkey he said,
469. "Did your wife like the apples?"
470. "... Yeah.
471. Yeah she did.
472. Yeah.
473. She liked them so much..
474. she'd uh...
475. she'd like ta..
476. she'd like ta have...you...
477. for dinner."
478. "I'm invited to *dinner*?"
479. (Audience murmurs)
480. "That is *so nice*,
481. I've never been invited to dinner before, it's so exciting, what am I gonna *wear*, I mean, I don't have a tuxedo, in fact, I don't have any clothes at *all*, I **inhale**..."
482. Crocodile said "No no, it's, it's an informal dinner just...it's a...just come as you are..dinner."
483. And the monkey said, "Wha! Wha, ha,
484. this is amazing,
485. I've only known you two days **excited sounds**,
486. will I bring you some apples for the dinner?"
487. Crocodile said, "Sure.
488. Why not."
489. So the monkey grabbed the apples, and he said "Oh!
490. Oh but I can't swim.
491. How will I get to your house?"
492. Crocodile said, "'s, 's okay I'll..
493. I'll carry you."

494. *"You are the best friend ever!"*
495. said the monkey.
496. And he *leapt* from the tree,
497. carrying all these apples in his hands,
498. and he landed on the crocodile's back, and the crocodile caught him,
499. an' he had to walk into the river,
500. he started to swim.
501. Now the monkey was an excitable being, h' was an excitable creature, and when he got
excited he liked to make up songs,
502. and so he was sat on the crocodile's back,
503. his songs weren't very good,
504. but he, he was singing—
505. "I:m goin' ...to di:nner—uh, uh—I'm goin' ...to di:nner!"
506. And he was so happy, you know his heart was really in the song,
507. and crocodile just felt so *bad*,
508. that he stopped in the middle of the river.
509. He knew what he had to do,
510. but he could at least warn his friend of his impending fate.
511. And he said,
512. "Listen.
513. My wife just doesn't want to have you over..
514. for dinner,
515. she wants to
516. have you
517. for
518. the dinner.
519. Most specifically she wants your heart for dinner."
520. And monkey said, "Oh!
521. Uh, oh! Well,
522. why didn't you tell me?"
523. Crocodile said "What?"
524. "Well yeah why didn't tell me you—your wife wants my heart for dinner,
525. absolutely,
526. but my heart's a very precious commodity,
527. uh uh, I don't carry it around with me everywhere,
528. I keep it in the tree!"
529. (Laughter)
530. "So..bring me back to the tree,
531. I'll rush up there, I'll get the heart, bring it down,
532. your wife can have it for dinner!"

533. (Laughter)
534. And crocodile said “Really?
535. You’d do that for *me*?”
536. And monkey said “Yeah!
537. We’re friends!
538. But you’ve gotta take me back to the tree first so I can get up and get my heart for you,
yeah?”
539. Crocodile said “Su:re!
540. No problem!”
541. Crocodile turned around, now *everybody was going to be happy*, so he swam really fast,
back to the tree!
542. Got back to the tree, stepped into the mud,
543. and monkey shot off his back,
544. up the tree,
545. got to the top of the tree,
546. looked down and said,
547. *Blows raspberry!*548. (Laughter)
549. Never came down that tree again.
550. And that is why my friends,
551. to this day,
552. crocodile and monkey?
553. Are sworn
554. enemies.

APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIPTS, DANIEL MORDEN

Tatterhood

1. Before I begin...
2. we should give thanks
3. for the don'ts.
4. "Don't look over your shoulder."
5. "Don't taste from that tree," that's a good one.
6. "Don't stray from the path,"
7. "Don't open that box."
8. Without them, there'd be—forget it. *Switches microphones*
9. (Laughter and applause)
10. Without them...
11. (Laughter)
12. The mistakes, I mean,
13. like this one...
14. there'd be no stories.
15. They're the grit..that makes the pearl.
16. The don'ts..are the vital imperfection.
17. When I hear a "don't" in a story,
18. I think
19. "Ah...
20. this one's for me."
21. (Laughter)
22. For us stumbling, bumbling, fumbling humans.
23. Stories are mirrors,
24. they show us ourselves,
25. in all our screwed-up, tousled glory.
26. What use to us is a perfect hero?
27. He must lose the important letter,
28. drop the egg,
29. pick up the forbidden feather.
30. If he doesn't...he's not of this world—
31. he belongs up there.
32. With the gods and the goddesses.
33. The perfect,
34. pristine,
35. sterile,
36. serene gods.
37. Achilles, give thanks for your heel.

38. Without it you'd have been forgotten long ago.
39. (Laughter, applause)
40. And I thank you, Eve.
41. I thank you, Pandora.
42. (Bit of laughter, isolated cheer)
43. We should give thanks for all these transgressions because they gave us stories.
44. Proper stories.
45. They took us the long way home,
46. through the dark forest,
47. over the glass mountain and when we got back,
48. we had a story to tell.
49. A proper story,
50. with doubts,
51. and loves,
52. and trials,
53. and crises.
54. It's the twists...
55. that make the pattern beautiful.
56. I'd also like to thank Ed Stivender.
57. (Laughter)
58. For this *wonderful spoon*.
59. (Applause)
60. Once upon a time there was a perfect palace.
61. Everything was perfect except...
62. except the *king* had gotten himself *killed* in some futile *war*?
63. And the queen had no children.
64. She felt their absence more and more.
65. Whenever she saw a mother with her daughter,
66. it was as though a dagger had been thrust into the queen's belly.
67. One night she could stand it no longer, she took off her crown,
68. she took off her fine clothes, she dressed herself instead as a commoner.
69. She crept out of a secret passage of her palace,
70. and she made her way into the forest—once she was good and lost,
71. she sat down on a tree stump and wept.
72. After a while...she felt eyes on her.
73. She looked up and here was a white-haired woman.
74. "Why do you cry?"
75. "I cry because I have no children.
76. What I wouldn't give for a beautiful baby girl."
77. Now the white-haired woman was a witch. A good witch, for there are..such..things.

78. “Go home.
79. Get yourself two buckets of water.
80. Wash yourself from head to foot from those buckets.
81. Ring out the flannels back into the buckets.
82. Then pour some water from the first bucket onto one plate,
83. some water
84. from the second bucket onto another plate and put the plates underneath your bed.
85. Go to sleep.
86. In the morning,
87. when you check the plates you will see...
88. growing from each plate there will be a plant.
89. The first plant will have born a *bright* fruit.
90. The second plant will have born a dark one.
91. Eat the *bright* fruit.
92. *Gesture*
93. (Laughter)
94. Here it comes...
95. (Laughter)
96. Don’t eat the dark one!
97. (Laughter)
98. So the queen went home, she did as she was bid. She washed herself from head to foot,
99. she wrung out the flannels back into the buckets, she poured from the two buckets onto plates, she slid the plates underneath her bed, she went to sleep—
100. next morning she woke up...
101. *Gesture*
102. (Laughter)
103. She was the queen!
104. Nobody had ever said “don’t” to her before.
105. So she ate the other one.
106. Nine months later she gave birth to a beautiful baby girl,
107. with hair like spun gold,
108. eyes as blue as the summer sky.
109. “Mama!” The queen, she looked down, “My beautiful baby girl.”
110. And then she went into labor again.
111. And she gave birth..to a dark-haired child.
112. A child with wild black hair,
113. dark skin, dark eyes,
114. eyes as dark as a winter’s night,
115. the second child,
116. “Mama!”

117. “Get rid of it, get rid of it at once!”
118. The queen
119. called..the bright child “*Ella*.”
120. The other one,
121. everyone called her “Tatterhood.”
122. Because you see,
123. the queen made her wear a hood to hide her face.
124. Ella,
125. she grew up in a nursery full of sunlight,
126. with books,
127. and dolls, and toys,
128. she had a horse to ride on—
129. people taught her how to say clever things and dance,
130. Tatterhood..
131. grew up in the stables with the animals.
132. No one ever taught her anything,
133. everything she knew,
134. she taught herself!
135. She had no dolls,
136. so instead she played with *Ed Stivender’s spoon*!
137. (Laughter)
138. Woohoo!
139. (Laughter)
140. Good old Ed.
141. (Laughter)
142. She had no horse so instead she rode a goat.
143. “Yippee!!!!!!”
144. Time passed and time passed the two children,
145. they grew up
146. to be young women.
147. Tatterhood was always up to something or other,
148. climbing trees,
149. exploring in the woods,
150. making dens,
151. she was a never-ending source of frustration and embarrassment to the queen.
152. And the worst part?
153. Ella
154. *loved* her sister!
155. They were inseparable!
156. One time a perfectly good prince came a-courting,

157. could they find Ella? They could not.
158. Eventually the queen went out into the woods,
159. and there
160. hanging upside-down from a tree like bats,
161. was both of the girls, their skirts dangling over their faces,
162. their legs scratched
163. “Come down! Come down at once! Not you, you’re no better than an animal.
164. Ella!
165. Do you want to end up looking like *her*?”
166. (Isolated laugh)
167. Ella looked at Tatterhood, and Tatterhood grinned a gap-toothed grin.
168. *Gesture*
169. (Laughter)
170. Ella said,
171. “I wouldn’t mind. She’s lovely!”
172. “What are you talking about, don’t be ridiculous!”
173. One time...
174. Tatterhood was woken in her stables,
175. in the straw she was woken by a great commotion,
176. coming from the palace.
177. And so Tatterhood,
178. she went to search for the source of the sound, she found herself—
179. before her mother’s bedroom.
180. Her mother was blocking the doorway.
181. “What’s going on?
182. What’s that noise?”
183. “None of your business!”
184. “I’ll find out one way or the other!”
185. ...“It’s midnight,” said the queen.
186. “And at midnight every year, when my birthday arrives,
187. so do my sisters.
188. Evil witches every one, they come to create chaos
189. in my *perfect palace*.”
190. Tatterhood: “Servants, fetch me Ed Stivender’s spoon.”
191. (Laughter)
192. “Bring me my goat!”
193. She sat on the goat she said “Mother, I’ll see ‘em off.
194. Get out ‘a the way.
195. While I’m in there, mother...
196. *don’t* let anyone else in.”

197. *Gesture*
198. (Laughter)
199. In she went.
200. The air was full like...
201. like—autumn leaves, the air was full of
202. whirling witches, whooping, cackling,
203. Tatterhood set to with Ed’s spoon, luckily he had two, because one got broken in the
process,
204. and then there was the butting
205. of the goat.
206. The noise was such..a great sound, such a commotion,
207. that..
208. Ella was woken.
209. And so she made her way down to her mother’s bedroom, she said “What’s going on in
there?”
210. “It’s your stupid sister,
211. she’s whacking witches.”
212. “You let my sister go in there and fight witches alone?”
213. She pushed
214. her mother out of the way, she opened the door,
215. poked in her head...
216. The moment she did,
217. one of the witches,
218. as she whirled by,
219. plucked off Ella’s head,
220. replaced it with the
221. head of a cow, and flew away.
222. (Scattered laughter)
223. The witches were gone.
224. Tatterhood looked at Ella, and Ella said,
225. “Mooooo.”
226. (Laughter)
227. And a great tear rolled from her eye, and dropped
228. from her muzzle.
229. “Look what you’ve done to my beautiful baby girl!” said the queen.
230. “What *I* did?
231. I told you, *don’t* let anyone in! But you did!
232. Where do they live, your sisters.”
233. “They live in the far north.
234. In the wild lands, to the far north.”

235. "Then I," said Tatterhood, "will go there...
236. Give me your ship."
237. "Guards," said the queen. "Prepare my ship.
238. Wake the captain.
239. Prepare the crew."
240. "Captain?" said Tatterhood. "Crew?
241. I don't need a crew. They'd only spoil it with cannons.
242. I'm the captain,
243. all I need is my goat,
244. my sister, and—"
245. ("Ed Stivender's spoon.") (some laughter)
246. So off they went.
247. Tatterhood steering,
248. sailing the ship,
249. until she saw,
250. looming over the ocean,
251. a tremendous castle, she went down below deck she said "Ella,
252. stay here.
253. I will return
254. with your real head."
255. Ella:
256. "Mooo."
257. (Laughter)
258. Tatterhood rode her goat up the hill,
259. sure enough she peered through a window, and didn't she see,
260. hanging from a hook,
261. in the hall of that castle,
262. Ella's head.
263. Tatterhood
264. crept through a window,
265. *whispered* she crept across the hall.
266. She lifted the head off the hook.
267. She crept back across the hall,
268. through the window,
269. onto the back of the goat. *whispered*
270. But the goat sneezed.
271. The witches heard.
272. They were on their brooms,
273. pursuing Tatterhood down the hill,
274. but Tatterhood *leapt* onto the deck of the ship,

275. and as I'm sure you know from The Wizard of Oz,
276. evil witches hate running water.
277. And so the witches pulled back,
278. but they summoned the winds from their four quarters,
279. and the north wind threw them for the south wind to catch,
280. Tatterhood's ship was tossed hither and yon...
281. The next morning, when the storm had abated,
282. when they had moved out of the range of the spell,
283. Tatterhood saw before her
284. a harbor
285. of some strange city. She steered a course
286. into the harbor. There she docked the ship, she went down below-decks,
287. and it was...
288. *Gestures and sound effects, replacing head*
289. Ella kissed her sister.
290. Now,
291. this kingdom was ruled over wisely and well by a young king with the help of his brother.
292. The king was woken by a servant who said "Your highness, there—
293. that great tempest has brought some *strange ship*."
294. "Is that so?" said the king.
295. He looked out of the window and didn't he see, flapping on the mast of the ship,
296. a royal pennant.
297. "Go to them.
298. Greet them in my name.
299. Invite them to come and..
300. dine with me."
301. And so,
302. the servant went down the hill...
303. when he came..to the ship, all he saw,
304. was a young woman,
305. her head hidden by a hood,
306. *riding a goat*...
307. around the deck.
308. Brandishing...
309. ("Ed Stivender's spoon!")
310. "Where's the crew?"
311. "I'm the crew!"
312. "Where's the captain?"
313. "I'm the captain! There's just me and my sister."
314. "Is that so?" said the servant, "Well the king of this land,

315. he invites you to come an', and dine with him.
316. Will you come?"
317. "If he wants us, he must come here,
318. and invite us
319. himself."
320. So down came the king.
321. Tatterhood greeted him politely,
322. led him aboard the deck,
323. she opened up the door
324. down into the cabin below,
325. and *out came Ella*.
326. Guess what?
327. (Laughter)
328. Anything? What?
329. As soon as the king saw Ella,
330. and Ella saw King,
331. guess what.
332. (Responses)
333. And so there was a feast that evening.
334. (Laughter)
335. A very strange feast it was...
336. There was the king.
337. *Gesture*
338. There was Ella.
339. *Gesture*
340. (Laughter)
341. There was Tatterhood.
342. *Devouring noises*
343. (Laughter)
344. And there was the king's brother, the prince.
345. *Gesture*
346. (Laughter)
347. In the weeks that followed...
348. the king did it right.
349. He would take Ella for walks in the—
350. the rose gardens.
351. He would..write poems for them.
352. They were *dreadful* but well-meant.
353. (Laughter)
354. Musicians...

355. would play music for her. And then he dropped down on one knee, he took Ella's hand, and
 he asked her to make him the happiest man in the world.
 356. "I wish I could" said Ella.
 357. "But I can't!
 358. If I were to marry you,
 359. my sister would be all alone,
 360. all alone in the worl—"
 361. ...
 362. "Wait," said Ella.
 363. "What if your brother...
 364. was to marry...
 365. *my sister?*"
 366. The king said...
 367. "I can ask him?"
 368. (Laughter)
 369. So. Perhaps
 370. you were peering through a window when the conversation took place. There was the king
 and the prince,
 371. and the king—
 372. *Gesturing*
 373. (Laughter)
 374. "*Have you gone out of your mind?!*"
 375. (Laughter)
 376. "I'm sorry," said Ella when she heard—
 377. the news, she said, "I am so sorry.
 378. I won't abandon her after what she's done for me.
 379. We leave in one week."
 380. During that week, the king, he couldn't sleep!
 381. He was *desperate*.
 382. He went down to the jetty, all he saw was Tatterhood,
 383. riding around the deck, brandishing—
 384. ("Ed Stivender's spoon!")
 385. So he went to his brother, he said "You will marry that girl, or I will cut off your head!"
 386. The prince said,
 387. "Cut off my head."
 388. (Laughter)
 389. So the king sent for the spin—
 390. do you have spin doctors here?
 391. He sent for his spin doctors..
 392. and one of them said,

393. “Marry this woman.
394. And then...
395. once you’re married,
396. lock her in the dungeon for the rest of her life.”
397. And the prince, “Hrmrm all right then.”
398. The king, when he heard, he was so excited,
399. he rushed across to hug his brother—
400. “*Get off me!*” said his brother.
401. The king, he didn’t even notice.
402. He was already making plans.
403. “Yes, we’ll have a procession.
404. We’ll make our way,
405. th—the happy couples will process through the streets of this city,
406. yes with everybody cheering, up to the cathedral on the hill.
407. Yes!”
408. And so the day came,
409. there they were.
410. The king—
411. *Gesture*
412. Ella—
413. *Gesture*
414. Tatterhood—
415. *Gesture*
416. (Laughter)
417. The prince—
418. *Gesture*
419. (Laughter)
420. Tatterhood:
421. “Prince,
422. why don’t you talk?”
423. ...
424. “*Sigh* What is there to talk about?”
425. “Why don’t you ask me why..I ride this goat?”
426. (Laughter)
427. “*Pwwwhh* Why...do you ride.
428. That.
429. Goat.”
430. “Because it is a *marvelous*,
431. a *magnificent* goat.”
432. D’you know when the prince took the time to look,

433. it actually was a rather wonderful goat!
434. (Laughter)
435. "Prince,
436. why don't you talk?"
437. "What is there to talk about?"
438. "Why don't you ask me
439. why I wear
440. this tatty hood?"
441. "Why..do you wear..the tatty..hood."
442. "Tatty?
443. It isn't tatty.
444. My hood is made of the finest silk."
445. When the prince took the time to look,
446. it was..
447. a rather beautiful, silky hood.
448. "Prince.
449. Why don't you talk?"
450. "What is there...
451. to talk about?"
452. "Why don't you ask me why I'm so ugly?"
453. "Why are you so ugly?"
454. "Ugly?
455. But I'm not ugly.
456. I am very, very attractive."
457. ...When the prince took the time to look—
458. (Laughter)
459. he realized he'd never seen a woman like her in all his—
460. Nordic, blond life!
461. Never had he seen..
462. a woman quite so extraordinary!
463. Her dark skin,
464. her wild hair,
465. her dark, dark eyes,
466. and that gap, between her front teeth—
467. it did something to him.
468. (Laughter)
469. He looked about,
470. the people weren't staring..
471. they were feasting their eyes upon her!
472. Everyone,

473. was staring at this extraordinary woman!
474. “Who are you?”
475. “As you see me, so I am.”
476. And so that day there was a wedding, a *double wedding*.
477. And after the wedding *such a feast* they had.
478. Fried chicken,
479. pimento cheese,
480. (Laughter)
481. sweet potato washed down with sweet tea and tapioca.
482. (Laughter)
483. And after the wedding,
484. the king,
485. Ella,
486. the prince and Tatterhood...
487. drank..from the bridal cup,
488. both deep..
489. and long.
490. (Applause)

The King of the Herrings

1. There are many stories about Jack.
2. (Laughter, murmurs and a cheer)
3. I uh, told one yesterday...
4. and beforehand, the emcee introduced the story I was telling by saying,
5. “Ray Hicks, long ago, was telling Jack Tales here, and it’s wonderful to have a Jack Tale
6. today
7. from, from Wales.”
8. The story I told was called “The Fiery Dragon,”
9. and I made my way up to uh the merchandise tent afterwards, to the um,
10. marketplace, have a look for Ray Hicks’
11. books and
12. CD’s.
13. Picked up a “Four Jack Tales”
14. CD.
15. From Ray Hicks.
16. Turned it over,
17. “Jack and the Old Fire Dragon.”
18. (Laughter, cheer)
19. ...

20. Socks!
21. (“Boots!”)
22. Socks!
23. (“Boots!”)
24. A quarryman and his wife
25. loved each other well.
26. All through their lives, they prayed for a child,
27. but their wish was only granted when they were very old.
28. The woman’s hair was white when her belly began to swell.
29. The neighbors were *amazed*
30. that so old a woman
31. could bear a child.
32. It was a *life* for a *life*.
33. The moment the baby’s life began..
34. his mother’s ended.
35. And now the quarryman had to care for the boy himself.
36. He did the best he could but he was old,
37. the boy was young,
38. the father was so afraid that he would die..
39. before his boy was a man
40. and could look after himself.
41. His worst fears were realized.
42. What with
43. earning a crust,
44. caring for his boy,
45. he forgot to care for himself,
46. and the quarryman took sick and died.
47. He wore himself to a thread and died.
48. The boy’s name was—
49. (“Jack!”)
50. As he walked away from his father’s funeral,
51. though he’d walked this road so many times he found himself lost,
52. in the mist, in the dark.
53. Never had he felt so alone.
54. And then out of the void, came a voice.
55. “Do you need help?”
56. ...“Yes.”
57. “What kind of help?” said the voice.
58. “If I could have anything in the world,” said Jack,
59. “I’d have a horse.

60. I don't *mind* what kind of horse.
61. I'd have a bow-legged horse.
62. With flies buzzing 'round its ears,
63. a *scabby, shabby, nag* of a horse.
64. Just a horse,
65. to be by my side,
66. to carry me far,
67. far,
68. and farther than far to the ends of the earth."
69. "Your wish," said the voice, "is granted."
70. And out of the darkness came a horse.
71. A bow-legged, shabby, scabby nag of a horse,
72. with flies buzzing 'round its ears.
73. (Laughter)
74. "Where should we go?"
75. "Where you *said*," said the horse.
76. "I'll carry you to the ends of the earth."
77. "What should I do?"
78. "If you meet anything in trouble,"
79. said the horse,
80. "help it all you can,
81. but *leave whatever you find*.
82. *No matter what it is*,
83. no matter if it's the finest thing you've *ever* seen,
84. because it'll be trouble for you. Now,
85. climb onto my back."
86. He climbed onto the horse's back and the horse was *gone* in a moment,
87. it was *off*—
88. and never had Jack felt so alive,
89. as in that moment, when he was riding the horse.
90. The world a blur,
91. the wind roaring in his ears!
92. Now they were crossing a beach.
93. Jack,
94. "STOP! I hear something."
95. He climbed down from the horse and here was a pool.
96. And in the pool, a fish the tide had left behind.
97. He picked up the fish, he carried it to the edge of the sea and threw it in.
98. The fish hi— lifted his head above the surface of the water—
99. "I thank you, Jack.

100. You saved my life.
101. When you need help, call for me.
102. Call for the *King* of the *Herrings*.
103. And I will come.”
104. “I will,” said Jack.
105. He climbed back onto the horse,
106. off went the horse,
107. soon they were crossing a plain.
108. Ahead,
109. Jack saw a hill
110. “STOP! I hear something.”
111. He climbed down,
112. from the horse. He ascended the hill
113. into a castle.
114. He heard a moaning, a groaning, the ground was shaking.
115. Jack made his way up a flight of stairs, each one the height of a man.
116. Into a bedroom, and there,
117. lying on a vast bed was a giant.
118. “Help me Jack.
119. I’m sick, I’m all alone.”
120. So Jack cram-, scrambled down the stairs,
121. found food and drink he returned,
122. he sat by the giant as the giant ate and drank.
123. “I thank you Jack.
124. You saved my life.
125. When you need help,
126. call for me.
127. Call for the King of the Giants,
128. and I will come.”
129. “I will,”
130. said Jack.
131. As he made his way down, uh, those stairs,
132. as he made his way out of the castle gates,
133. something fluttered out of the air and landed onto his lips.
134. He plucked it out he threw it away,
135. it fluttered in again.
136. This time he looked at it...
137. It was a *golden feather*.
138. Jack’s clothes...
139. were so patched...

140. he could not remember which of the pieces of cloth was the original.
141. He'd never owned anything fine or new.
142. And this feather,
143. it shone like the sun.
144. *Gesture, pocketing the feather*
145. Down the hill, onto the horse, without another word.
146. They rode through the night,
147. until they came to a city.
148. As Jack dismounted,
149. the *feather fell out of Jack's pocket*—
150. "WHAT is THAT?"
151. said the horse.
152. "It's nothing," said Jack.
153. "It's just a feather that blew into my mouth on the hill of the King of the Giants!"
154. "It's everything" said the horse.
155. "I *told* you
156. to *leave* whatever you found but you *took* it.
157. It'll be trouble for us, put it away!"
158. Jack put it in his pocket but it was too late!
159. Because you see the king of that city had soldiers at the corner of every street!
160. And one of those soldiers
161. had *seen* the *feather*!
162. He went straight to the king,
163. "Your highness, there's a young man in the city.
164. He's got a *feather*,
165. and it *shines* like the *sun*."
166. "Bring him here."
167. And so Jack was fetched to the king. The king...
168. *gesture*
169. Jack...
170. *gesture, heavy breathing*
171. "Beautiful.
172. You brought me the feather,
173. bring me the bird."
174. "Your highness, I've never seen or heard of this bird!
175. It could be *anywhere* on the *earth*!
176. The feather came out of the wind—"
177. A sword was pressed against his *throat*.
178. "You will bring me the bird,
179. or I will cut off your head!"

180. Jack bowed,
181. stumbled
182. down to the stables,
183. there was his horse...
184. he made his way,
185. towards
186. the horse,
187. the horse
188. just took one look at Jack and it knew,
189. that something was wrong.
190. "What is the matter?"
191. "Oh my horse, *pant*
192. how I wish, *pant*
193. I'd listened to you!
194. The king took one look at the feather and demanded I bring him the—"
195. ("Bird.")
196. "Don't despair,"
197. said the horse.
198. "I am here.
199. And I will help you all I can.
200. Climb onto my back."
201. He leapt onto the horse's back and they were gone.
202. The wind roaring in Jack's ears.
203. They came to the edge of the land the horse *leapt*
204. from the land onto the ocean,
205. its hooves making not a ripple,
206. it galloped across the *surface* of the *sea*.
207. Jack saw something shining on the horizon.
208. "Is that the sun?"
209. "No,
210. it's the Palace," said the horse,
211. "of the Princess of the Sun.
212. She owns the golden bird.
213. She keeps it in a golden cage.
214. A thousand shining soldiers guard her,
215. guard it.
216. But they're asleep.
217. Creep in,
218. grab cage and bird
219. touch *nothing* else,

220. and we'll be gone before they wake.”
221. They reached the gates..
222. of the palace.
223. Jack dismounted,
224. he pushed open the gates,
225. sure enough the courtyard was *strewn* with sleeping soldiers.
226. He picked his way between them,
227. he made his way into the palace—
228. *beautiful*, it was.
229. He came..to..
230. a bedroom.
231. *On the windowsill*,
232. a golden cage, and in the cage the golden bird,
233. but between him and it,
234. a bed.
235. And on the bed,
236. slept the Princess of the Sun.
237. ...
238. Jack...had thought the feather perfect?
239. (Laughter)
240. She...she was perfect.
241. (Baby cries)
242. Somewhere a baby cried...
243. (Laughter)
244. Don't worry, baby...
245. (Laughter)
246. I'm not doing *any more singing*.
247. (Laughter)
248. Nothing to worry—I did my singing yesterday.
249. No more singing, baby.
250. You can relax.
251. (Laughter)
252. The moment he saw the baby.
253. The princess.
254. (Laughter)
255. The *moment* he saw the princess—
256. (Laughter)
257. I have this,
258. I have this thing about babies, you know.
259. It's, it's the same,

260. sometimes people ask me to tell stories at weddings,
 261. I can't!
 262. I just cry!
 263. (Laughter)
 264. It's the same with babies!
 265. It's,
 266. I just blub up! I see a baby, I bl—,
 267. anyway.
 268. It's 'cause I'm British. You see, it's all this repressed emotion.
 269. (Laughter)
 270. Anyway,
 271. the *moment*...
 272. (Laughter)
 273. Jack saw the—
 274. ("Princess!")
 275. *Thank* you for that.
 276. (Laughter)
 277. It all could have gone horribly wrong.
 278. (Laughter)
 279. And there,
 280. on the pillow...
 281. the moment he saw the princess, he fell in love with her.
 282. And there, on the pillow...one hair.
 283. ...
 284. I'll never see her again.
 285. I'll *never see* her *again*!
 286. What harm would there be..
 287. in taking the hair..
 288. to remember her by.
 289. He lifted the hair from the pillow,
 290. AND THE PRINCESS JERKED UPRIGHT,
 291. AND SCREAMED.
 292. Jack grabbed cage and bird and ran,
 293. out of the palace, across the courtyard
 294. all around him the soldiers were stirring.
 295. He leapt onto the horse's back.
 296. He looked behind him, he wished he hadn't—
 297. a thousand shining soldiers chasing him,
 298. lunging for the horse's tail.
 299. He *leapt* through the gates,

300. the horse *kicked* them shut—
301. Jack returned to the king.
302. (Gesture)
303. ...
304. “What’s this?”
305. “Your highness, you asked me to bring you..the golden bird?”
306. “Oh yes, I’d forgotten.”
307. (Laughter)
308. “Where was it?”
309. “It was at the end of the world your highness
310. in the Palace of the Princess of the Sun.”
311. “The Princess of the Sun?
312. Tell me of the Princess of the Sun.”
313. “Oh your highness, never have I seen anyone so beautiful as the Princess of the Sun.”
314. “THEN I WILL MARRY HER.
315. *YOU*
316. WILL BRING ME THE PRINCESS OF THE SUN.”
317. “But your highness—“
318. A sword was pressed against Jack’s throat.
319. “YOU WILL BRING ME THE GIRL,
320. OR I WILL CUT OFF YOUR...”
321. (“Head!”)
322. Jack bowed and left.
323. He went to the stables,
324. “Oh my horse,
325. how I wish I’d given that feather to the WIND!
326. Now the king wants the Princess of the Sun!”
327. “Don’t despair,
328. don’t cry,
329. don’t..weep!
330. I am here.
331. And I will help you all I can.
332. Climb onto my back.”
333. He climbed onto the horse’s back, they galloped to the edge of the sea—
334. the horse told him to dismount,
335. the horse said,
336. “First,
337. I was a stallion.
338. Now,
339. I am a galleon!”

340. And suddenly, the horse was gone,
341. and on the sea,
342. there was
343. a magnificent ship.
344. Jack
345. climbed aboard the sailor's bow,
346. the sails were lowered, the anchors were lifted,
347. and off went the ship,
348. like an arrow loosed from a bow,
349. cutting a path
350. through the ocean.
351. On the walls
352. of the..palace of the Princess of the Sun,
353. the guards saw a *ship* approaching.
354. "What business do you have in these waters?"
355. "Silks!" shouted a sailor.
356. "We bring bright silks to sell to your mistress, the Princess of the Sun!"
357. And he hoisted up the mast seven flags of shimmering silk.
358. Each one of a different color.
359. She was the Princess of the Sun.
360. She *loved* bright *things*.
361. She looked out,
362. she saw the flags..
363. she had a rowing boat take her to the ship.
364. She climbed aboard,
365. she went down below decks to study the *bolts* of *silk* that this merchant had brought and
she..
366. stumbled.
367. She lost her balance..
368. The ship was in *motion*.
369. She ran back up onto the deck,
370. already her island had disappeared beneath the horizon behind them.
371. ...
372. She looked around the deck and here was one she knew.
373. "*You*...
374. *You* were the one who stole my bird, now you've kidnapped me."
375. "I *had* to. If I hadn't, my
376. king would have cut off my head!"
377. She said,
378. "Oh Jack,

379. do you want me to marry some fat old king?"
380. And she reached into her pocket
381. she took out a bunch of keys, (stomp!)
382. threw them into the sea.
383. The sea went red as blood,
384. the sky went black as oil,
385. and the rest of the voyage was a battle between wind and wave.
386. ...
387. When the king
388. saw the Princess of the Sun,
389. he smiled a smile so wide the two ends nearly met at the back of his head.
390. (Laughter)
391. "My bride."
392. ...
393. *Clears throat*
394. "Take my hand."
395. "I don't want to be here,"
396. she said.
397. "I want to be in *my* palace,
398. not yours."
399. The King...
400. "Jack..."
401. Oh yes.
402. (Laughter)
403. You brought me the Princess,
404. bring me her *palace*.
405. (Laughter and murmurs)
406. "What?"
407. said Jack?
408. "You will bring me the palace,
409. or I will cut off your—"
410. ("Head!")
411. Down to the stables,
412. "Oh my horse,
413. now the king wants the *Palace* of the Princess of the Sun!"
414. "Don't despair,
415. I am here.
416. I will help you all I can.
417. Climb onto my back"
418. he climbed onto the horse's back,

419. the horse was off.
420. Very quickly.
421. Jack:
422. “We’re going the wrong way!
423. My horse,
424. we’re going to the east,
425. the palace is to the west!”
426. “No,”
427. said the horse.
428. “First we must visit a friend.”
429. They were crossing a plain now,
430. and on the plain there was a hill,
431. and on the summit of the hill there was a castle.
432. “King of the Giants, if ever I needed your help it’s now!”
433. The King of the Giants strode out of—
434. this is a lovely moment for storytelling, I love this mess coming up now.
435. I love it.
436. It’s one of the moments...
437. (Laughter)
438. That, that *makes* me a storyteller.
439. The King of the Giants
440. *strode* over the ocean,
441. as though it were a puddle.
442. And then he pushed his fingers into the earth, and lifted the entire palace of the Princess of
the Sun
443. onto his shoulder,
444. and waded back across the sea and placed the Palace of the Princess of the Sun beside the
castle of the king.
445. All of that happened in our heads, ladies and gentlemen.
446. An impossible image in our heads.
447. And if Hollywood tried to do it,
448. they’d blow it.
449. (Laughter)
450. (Applause)
451. And we’ve got it here! *Points to head*
452. (Applause)
453. We didn’t need..
454. the turnover of a third world country
455. (Laughter)
456. to manufacture that image.

457. We just did it here.
458. This is why I love storytelling.
459. The princess,
460. she looked at her palace, she looked at the king.
461. "This is all very well...
462. but the gates are locked.
463. I can't open them without my keys.
464. And they're in the depths of the sea."
465. "Jack,
466. you brought me the palace
467. bring me the keys."
468. "But your highness!"
469. (Gesture)
470. (Laughter)
471. Jack went down the stables.
472. His horse:
473. "Have you forgotten your friend, the King of the..."
474. "Herrings!"
475. So Jack...
476. and his horse they rode to the edge of the sea.
477. The King of the Herrings swum down into the depths
478. he returned with the barnacle-studded keys.
479. Jack took them in his hand,
480. he rode back,
481. he gave them to the Princess
482. she took the keys in her hand.
483. She looked at the king..
484. she looked at Jack..
485. she took one key..
486. she walked over to the gate,
487. she unlocked the gate,
488. and the moment she did, her shining army poured out and defeated the army of the king.
489. (Laughter, cheers, applause)
490. "So," she said.
491. "Both of you,
492. you look at me...
493. as if you want me.
494. I wonder if either of you is worthy of me.
495. King do you love me?"
496. "Course I love you,"

497. said the king.
498. "You're beautiful."
499. (Laughter)
500. "Jack, do you love me?"
501. "I have loved you ever since I saw you sleeping in your bed.
502. I have loved you since the moment I first saw you and mistook you for a baby."
503. (Laughter!!!)
504. (Applause)
505. The king glared at Jack then.
506. "Your highness...
507. who do you love the most?"
508. The king said,
509. "Myself."
510. "That's true," she said. "Jack, who do you love *above*..
511. *all else*."
512. Jack said...
513. "My horse."
514. (Laughter!!!)
515. "That's true.
516. King, would you kill yourself for me?"
517. The king said,
518. "*No*."
519. "Jack...
520. if you were to take a sword...
521. and cut off the head of your horse...
522. you would prove to me and everyone here you love me more than the king loves me,
523. and then I would take your hand,
524. and be your wife.
525. *A life*,
526. for a *life*.
527. Can you do this?"
528. ... "Yes."
529. It was the *horse* who had spoken.
530. Jack went to the horse..
531. he put his arms around the horse's warm neck,
532. he put his face in the horse's mane, and he said,
533. "No!
534. Every time I stumbled,
535. every time I faltered,
536. you were there to lift me,

537. to carry me.
538. ...Don't ask me to return that kindness in this way."
539. The horse said,
540. "Think back over our time together.
541. ...When you followed my advice,
542. all went well.
543. When you ignored it...
544. remember what happened.
545. Take a sword.
546. Cut off my head."
547. Jack's eyes were full of tears, he took a sword,
548. he walked toward the horse,
549. he lifted the blade above his head,
550. he brought the blade down with *all* the *strength* of both arms,
551. he closed his eyes, he felt the shock, as the blade struck the flesh.
552. And when he opened his eyes,
553. his horse...
554. lay dead.
555. The princess said..
556. "You have won me."
557. ...As Jack reached to take her hand,
558. he heard the voice of his horse in his ears.
559. "Dear Jack...
560. don't be sad.
561. Don't cry.
562. Remember when we first met.
563. ...After my funeral.
564. I am the spirit of your father.
565. I couldn't leave you.
566. You needed a friend.
567. A companion.
568. I was your friend,
569. your companion for as long as you needed me.
570. But you are a man now.
571. A grown man.
572. And so I will go to heaven.
573. Where I belong."
574. (Applause and cheering)

The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew

1. Thank you, goodbye.
2. (Laughter)
3. It's downhill all the way after that.
4. (Laughter)
5. What an introduction.
6. You know, Ed, you know he did that thing where...
7. I told him that I..turned down *laugh*
8. this festival three times, and Ed—
9. Ed just did this thing where he went *gesture* “blllhh!”
10. He really did that!
11. (Laughter)
12. He really..did that!
13. (Laughter)
14. You should have seen the reaction!
15. It's probably,
16. that reaction alone,
17. is probably the reason why..
18. I'm standing here now.
19. (Laughter, applause)
20. So it's *his* fault.
21. (Laughter)
22. A hundred years ago,
23. in Wales, there was
24. a Roma family
25. called the Woods.
26. And..they were trilingual. They had
27. English, they had the Welsh,
28. and they had their own language, Romany.
29. And...they were—
30. I hesitate to use the word “discovered” on this side of the Atlantic, but they were “discovered”
31. (Laughter)
32. By a professor of languages, his name was John Sampson.
33. He was based in Liverpool?
34. and he discovered..this..community,
35. speaking such a pure form of the Romany language,
36. he could hear,
37. in the sentence construction, in the vocabulary,
38. traces of Sanskrit.

39. So, he would spend every summer with them.
40. He would spend every summer
41. studying their language.
42. Writing down what they said,
43. analyzing it,
44. and they became a kind of a cause celebre.
45. He..became..more than professionally infatuated with them,
46. he became fascinated by this
47. lifestyle, which for him seemed very free,
48. seemed very um,
49. lacking in all the..physical encumbrances that..dragged him down, you know the,
50. the daily grind. These people seemed to have a very wild and free life.
51. Much of what they did was tell stories,
52. men and women..
53. would tell stories,
54. in this family.
55. Around the fire,
56. under the light of the stars and the moon.
57. And so he began to write down their stories,
58. initially because of the language in which they were being told,
59. but he became fascinated by those stories,
60. and he founded an organization called the Gypsy Lore Society.
61. And he would publish the stories
62. from..those gatherings
63. in the journal
64. of the Gypsy Lore Society.
65. And eventually anthology of those stories was published.
66. And, *sigh,* I don't know, maybe 15, 18 years ago I
67. had an insomniac night
68. in a friend's house,
69. and what do you do when you're—stuck..
70. somewhere away from home,
71. you can't sleep,
72. you go to the bookshelf,
73. and there was this battered paperback..
74. "Gypsy Folktales."
75. I pulled it out and I opened it,
76. and,
77. well, I'm among friends, here,
78. we're all story addicts,

79. so I will fess up—
80. I read the titles of the stories,
81. the Contents page?
82. I read the titles,
83. and I was actually drooling.
84. (Laughter)
85. Salivating.
86. “The Leaves That Hung But Never Grew.”
87. *Face*
88. (Laughter)
89. “The King of the Herrings.” *sigh*
90. And then I opened the stories,
91. and I discovered that they were written down in what must have been a very romantic, old-
fashioned form of English, even then.
92. There were “thee’s” and “thou’s” in the stories.
93. And, they were all told in the present tense!
94. I was in a school recently telling one of these stories and I said to the children,
95. “Can you think of some words we don’t use anymore in our language?
96. Old-fashioned words.”
97. And this girl put up a hand and said,
98. “Landline?”
99. (Laughter) (Applause)
100. So...the words were older than that.
101. (Laughter)
102. They were,
103. they would have been old a hundred years ago,
104. they would have been out-of-date, old-fashioned a hundred years ago.
105. And these are now—so I had to rewrite the stories, I had to sort of
106. take away the, the old-fashioned clothes an-, an-, and see what was left.
107. And..the stories were written down under the light of the stars and the moon...
108. As the teller was telling.
109. And so sometimes the first half of a story would be wonderful...
110. vivid, mysterious, like some kind of waking dream.
111. And the second half of a story would..take..two sentences.
112. Meh—, I don’t know what happened, maybe
113. the storyteller was telling the story and it started to rain!
114. (Laughter)
115. It’s happened..
116. to me.
117. (Laughter)

118. So, ih—they, the stories were
119. tantalizing.
120. But they were a bit like a jigsaw puzzle from a thrift shop?
121. (Laughter)
122. So...I, I, I researched other stories,
123. r-, equivalent stories from all over Europe and I,
124. I rebuilt the stories, the bits that I thought were missing,
125. a bit like those, um..
126. scientists in Jurassic Park who—
127. (Laughter)
128. you know, used the frog DNA to rebuild the dino-,
129. yeah, I did that.
130. (Laughter)
131. And, the result is, is the book that Ed..
132. so eloquently plugged,
133. Dark Tales from the Woods,
134. the Woods being the storytellers who first told
135. the stories.
136. So..I, I'm gonna share some of those stories with you now.
137. Now, the Woods had an advantage over me..
138. many advantages, one being that they were..*amazing* storytellers.
139. Uh, they were also
140. familiar with their audience.
141. Their audience were friends.
142. So, there was..an interaction..around the fire,
143. between the teller and the listener,
144. that is slightly more difficult,
145. here.
146. The storytellers were..
147. very passionate.
148. They were so passionate that sometimes when
149. something dreadful happened to a character in the story,
150. the storyteller
151. himself or herself
152. would weep.
153. Sometimes they would be so *angry* at what had happened to one of the characters in the
story,
154. that they would be furious,
155. they would be *horrifying* to behold,
156. their eyes would bulge, the veins would stick out in their necks...

157. I can't do that, I'm British!
158. (Laughter)
159. I don't *have* feelings.
160. (Laughter)
161. Except a general...
162. just a sort of boiling frustration, irritation, and resentment at the world.
163. (Laughter)
164. Which I never express!
165. (Laughter)
166. Verbally.
167. (Laughter)
168. So, you're gonna have ta—
169. you're American,
170. you *do* passion!
171. (Laughter)
172. You *do* passion.
173. Somebody stopped me in the street a couple days ago, and asked me what the time was,
174. I told them what the time was,
175. and she said, "*Awesome.*"
176. (Laughter)
177. What's she gonna do when she sees the Grand Canyon?
178. (Laughter) (Applause)
179. Whereas in Wales,
180. if you want to say something's good...
181. you describe it as "tidy."
182. (Laughter)
183. If it is *very* good,
184. you describe it as "*half* tidy."
185. (Laughter)
186. And if it's even better still,
187. the ultimate compliment,
188. "*not* half tidy."
189. (Laughter)
190. This is, this is where I'm coming from, this is where I'm *starting* from.
191. (Laughter)
192. So you can appreciate..
193. the problem I might have,
194. with it, trying to convey the sense of being under the light o' the stars and the moon with a,
195. with a..*wonderful*, listening to or emulating the, th- the *performance*,
196. of one of the Wood family.

197. But, you're gonna help me,
198. because, I'm gonna speak to you, and you're gonna reply.
199. Now when the teller began his or her story,
200. he or she would want to know the audience were ready.
201. And so, he or she would shout, "Socks!" and the audience had to shout back—
202. ("Boots!")
203. (Laughter)
204. You see? I am among friends.
205. (Laughter)
206. I—I had a plan for this program.
207. (Laughter)
208. And then, I was just standing here and Sherri walked up, and had a chat with me about
what I told last night,
209. and I changed all my plan all over again.
210. So thank you, Sherri,
211. this story is for you.
212. (Cheer)
213. Socks!
214. ("Boots!")
215. Socks!
216. ("Boots!")
217. Socks!
218. ("Boots!")
219. Once, there was a weeping house.
220. The dog wept in the yard outside.
221. The birds wept on the gutters.
222. Inside, the master, the owner of the house, sat at his table, sobbing,
223. and upstairs a young man sat at the end of his bed,
224. his hand clenched into a fist.
225. He cried for some bad luck he could no longer remember.
226. One day a young woman walked up the drive.
227. Her hair was clogged with twigs and leaves,
228. her clothes no more than greasy rags,
229. she was barefoot.
230. The dog didn't growl,
231. he kept whining in his muddy puddle.
232. She was taken in to see the master.
233. She said to the old man,
234. "I've heard of this place,
235. from the people in the village.

236. I've heard...
 237. if any young woman,
 238. can make the young man in this house smile,
 239. she can marry him.
 240. I want to try.
 241. And if I fail, I don't know what I'll do."
 242. The master said,
 243. "You aren't the first.
 244. Many women have come here,
 245. fine women who wanted for nothing except a gentleman for a husband.
 246. They took my son outside into the sunlight.
 247. They sang to him.
 248. They tickled him,
 249. they tried and failed.
 250. You...you have as much right to try as all the others.
 251. I wish you *luck*.
 252. A sobbing servant led her upstairs.
 253. There sat the young man at the end of his bed, his hand clenched into a...
 254. ("Fist.")
 255. A servant had put a bucket between his feet to catch his tears.
 256. There were grooves on his cheeks from all the tears he'd cried.
 257. She sat beside him,
 258. "Why do *you* cry?
 259. You want for *nothing*.
 260. You have a *roof* over your head.
 261. You have *food*, *servants*..
 262. to *wash* and *cook* and *clean* for you.
 263. Me, all I have..
 264. are these rags.
 265. My father,
 266. my mother are dead."
 267. She said,
 268. "Listen to me,
 269. and I will tell you a story.
 270. Perhaps...it will stop
 271. one..little..tear.."

272. *Bell*

273. Once upon a time there lived a young woman called Anwen.
 274. She lived with her mother in a cottage.
 275. They were so poor they had to share a bed.

276. Even though they were poor, they always made sure there was smoke coming out the chimney and hens scratching in the yard outside.
277. One night,
278. as she slept,
279. Anwen dreamt
280. she should search until she found
281. *the Leaves That Hung But Never Grew.*
282. Next morning she told her mother of her dream and her mother said,
283. “If you set your heart on traveling, I can’t stop you, but listen to me,
284. sometimes, the world is not the way it seems.
285. If you see something you don’t understand
286. wait.
287. Watch before you speak.”
288. Anwen kissed her mother,
289. and she set off, following the road wherever it took her.
290. Evening came, the sky went red,
291. in front of the red sky? A hill.
292. At the bottom of the hill? A cottage.
293. At the top of the hill? A tree.
294. With *seven boney branches*, and hanging from each branch,
295. she saw
296. one..little..leaf.
297. An old woman came out of the cottage.
298. “Night is coming,
299. and I’m sorry to tell you, the roads ‘round here at night are not safe for one such as you.
300. Come in.”
301. Anwen went in.
302. It was a strange home.
303. Half the room was cozy and comfortable.
304. The other half was a filthy, stinking pigsty.
305. In the pigsty there was a wild boar.
306. When it saw Anwen, it squealed.
307. It strained at its chain
308. it scuffed at the ground.
309. The old woman had a daughter.
310. A young woman..so gaunt..that suddenly Anwen felt chubby beside her.
311. The old woman,
312. “Bag of Bones, do something right for once! *snap*
313. Go and get some water from the well!”
314. Her daughter: *flinch*

315. She went outside,
316. and she came back dragging a cauldron that slopped water onto the flagstones.
317. Her mother,
318. “Tsk, Anwen, I’m sure you’re tired after your journey.
319. Please sit down! Eat! Drink!”
320. So Anwen sat,
321. she ate and drank,
322. and they talked about this, and they talked about—
323. “That!”
324. And as they talked,
325. Anwen was careful.
326. She said nothing
327. about the Leaves That Hung But Never Grew.
328. She remembered her mother’s advice!
329. She said she was poor,
330. and she was searching for her fortune.
331. “I don’t know about a fortune,” said the old woman,
332. “but I do need..a bit of help
333. around my cottage,
334. my *stupid daughter couldn’t bring some water from the well without SPILLING IT.*
335. So Anwen,
336. if you can sweep the floor,
337. keep the fire alight,
338. and feed the boar each night,
339. I’ll give you whatever food I can spare,
340. and in a few months when the boar is big and fat...
341. we’ll have a feast.
342. What do you say?”
343. Anwen said she was
344. grateful. She said she was glad to stay.
345. The days turned into weeks,
346. the weeks turned into—
347. “Months!”
348. Every day she swept the fire,
349. she, she swept the floor,
350. she kept the fire alight,
351. she fed the boar each night,
352. and every day,
353. three times a day,
354. the old woman gave her a plate piled high with good things to eat.

355. And she *insisted* Anwen *cleared the plate* before she stood.
356. For the first time in her life,
357. Anwen found
358. there was *flesh*
359. on her bones.
360. Instead of just skin.
361. But a strange thing...
362. if ever Bag of Bones,
363. the daughter of this house,
364. asked for another morsel,
365. another mouthful,
366. her mother
367. would pick up a ladle and *stomp* bounce it off her daughter's back.
368. It was hard for Anwen to eat
369. when Bag of Bones
370. was across the room,
371. watching her,
372. following
373. every forkful.
374.
375. Each night, Anwen would gaze out of the window,
376. at the tree.
377. With its bony branches,
378. with its little leaves.
379. But she..never spoke of them.
380. One time, mother and daughter were outside in the yard,
381. Anwen was feeding the boar,
382. and she spoke her thoughts aloud for the first time.
383. "Whole months have passed by,
384. and I'm no closer to finding out if those are the leaves I dreamt of.
385. What should I do?"
386. To her astonishment, the boar answered her.
387. "You have spoken to me,
388. now I can speak!
389. I'd given up hope that ever you would do so.
390. Listen to me!
391. Those are the leaves you dreamt of!
392. I know,
393. because I dreamt of them too.
394. I was a young man then,

395. I had a dream,
396. I searched until I came to this place,
397. I saw the leaves,
398. I asked the old woman if I could pick them from the tree,
399. *she...is..a witch!*
400. She spelled me!
401. She spelled me into a boar,
402. now she's *fattening* me up!
403. Soon she'll slit my throat, cook me, and eat me.
404. And once she's eaten me...
405. guess who she'll spell next?
406. Already she's fattening you up.
407. Unless you want to be a sow,
408. squealing in this sty,
409. you must steal those leaves.
410. You must flee from this place."
411. Later,
412. when mother and daughter,
413. were fast asleep upstairs,
414. Anwen crept out the cottage, up the hill,
415. she pulled every leaf from its bony branch.
416. She made her way down the hill.
417. She was about to run away...
418. when she remembered the boar.
419. She went into the cottage, she took the first magic leaf,
420. and with it **stomp** she struck the boar.
421. The leaf in her hand vanished.
422. The boar became a young man.
423. She had broken the spell.
424. Then she took the poker,
425. and the broom, and she put them both on a chair.
426. She took the second magic leaf,
427. she struck poker, broom, and chair.
428. "Poker! You will say,
429. "I am poking the fire."
430. So the poker said...
431. ("I am poking the fire!")
432. Broom, you will say "I'm sweeping the floor!"
433. ("I'm sweeping the floor!")
434. Chair, you will say "I'm coming now!"

435. (“I’m coming now!”)
436. Then she and the young man fled.
437.
438. Next morning,
439. the witch..woke up.
440. The cottage seemed so quiet,
441. so she shouted,
442. down the stairs,
443. “Anwen, dear,
444. what are you doing?”
445. *snap* The poker:
446. (“I’m stoking/poking the fire.”)
447. So the witch rolled over, she fell back to sleep!
448. And all through the hours she was sleeping, Anwen and the young man were running.
449. Eventually, the witch woke up.
450. “Anwen, what are you doing now?”
451. The broom:
452. (“I’m sweeping the floor.”)
453. The witch rolled over, she fell back to sleep.
454. A few more hours, she woke up—
455. “Anwen, come here!”
456. The chair said,
457. “I am coming now.”
458. The witch waited.
459. She waited and waited, no footsteps on the stairs.
460. She looked out of the wind—
461. “(Gasp) Bag of Bones!
462. The Tree is bare!
463. Anwen’s discovered our secret!
464. She’s stolen the leaves!
465. She’s freed the young man!
466. They’re *in the forest!*
467. They must be in the forest, that’s where I would go if I was fleeing from this place.
468. Off you go, my daughter,
469. *and bring me back whatever you find.*”
470. And so Bag of Bones pulled on her clothes,
471. and she was gone out of the hut as swift as thought.
472. Anwen and the young man were running,
473. and now they could hear the sound of pursuit,
474. just a few turns behind her,

475. on the track,
476. Anwen reached into her pocket, she said,
477. "Whoever it is, we can't outrun her.
478. So we will hide.
479. I will throw this leaf on the ground,
480. step on it.
481. We will change our shapes.
482. You..become a pond, I will be a duck."
483. Round the corner of the track came Bag of Bones.
484. ...
485. The footsteps, the footprints, ended.
486. "Little duck,
487. did you see..
488. a young woman,
489. a young man pass by this way?"
490. The duck said nothing.
491. *Laughter*
492. It disappeared beneath the surface of the water.
493. The witch's daughter, pwh!
494. she went home.
495. there was the witch.
496. "Well?"
497. "I didn' find anythin'!
498. I went in the forest, I followed their footprints,
499. they led me to a pond and on the pond I *saw a sweet little duck.*"
500. (Laughter)
501. "The footprints ended by a pond...
502. and on the pond...
503. there was a duck THAT WAS THEM.
504. ONE *FEATHER* FROM THAT DUCK AND I'D HAVE HAD BOTH OF THEM IN A
BLINK.
505. OFF YOU GO MY DAUGHTER,
506. AND THIS TIME,
507. BRING ME WHAT YOU FIND."
508. Off went Bag of Bones,
509. out..into the forest again. Anwen heard her approaching,
510. she took out the next magic leaf.
511. "We will try the same trick.
512. This time you be a bush,
513. I will be a bee."

514. "Little bee,
 515. little bee, did you see...
 516. a young woman, a young man pass by this way?"
 517. The bee said nothing.
 518. It disappeared into the pink folds of a rose.
 519. I told this story once,
 520. and..there was a Freudian psychoanalyst in the audience.
 521. (Laughter)
 522. And she said "Daniel, all your stories are so sexual."
 523. (Laughter)
 524. And I said "What d'you mean?" She said,
 525. "The *Leaves That Hung, But Never Grew.*"
 526. (Laughter)
 527. "Little bee, little bee..."
 528. The bee said nothing.
 529. Bag of Bones, pwh!
 530. she returned to the cott—
 531. "Well, have you brought me what you found,"
 532. "I didn't find anything!"
 533. "I went in the forest, I followed their footprints,
 534. they led me to a bush,
 535. and on the bush there was a rose, strange to say out of season.
 536. And in the rose, *I saw a sweet little bee.*"
 537. "A rose," said the witch.
 538. And in the rose,
 539. there was a bee- *THAT WAS THEM.*
 540. ONE PETAL FROM THAT ROSE AND I'D HAVE HAD BOTH OF THEM IN A
 BLINK.
 541. OFF YOU GO, AND *THIS* TIME,
 542. *BRING ME WHAT YOU—*"
 543. ("Find!")
 544. Off went Bag of Bones,
 545. into the forest.
 546. Anwen heard her approaching.
 547. Anwen took out her,
 548. her leaf, she said, "This time,
 549. you be a tree,
 550. I..will be..an apple."
 551. Thank goodness it wasn't a banana.
 552. (Laughter)

553. “Little apple,
554. little apple swinging on your stalk,
555. did you see
556. a young woman,
557. a young man pass by this way?”
558. The apple said nothing.
559. It just wriggled in the wind.
560. Pwh, Bag of Bones went back.
561. “Have you brought me what you found?”
562. “I didn’t find nothing!
563. I went in the forest, I, I, I followed their footprints, I couldn’t find a pond, or a duck, or a
bush, or a bee—
564. all I could see..
565. was a tree.
566. And on the tree,
567. a red-cheeked,
568. *a cheeky little apple.*”
569. “You *stupid girl.*
570. If you wanna do something, you’ve gotta do it yourself
571. *GET OUT OF THE WAY.*”
572. And off went the witch,
573. running even swifter than thought.
574. Anwen and the young man came out of the forest,
575. there was nowhere for them to hide.
576. They could hear someone
577. approaching.
578. They came to a crossroads.
579. Anwen reached into her pocket—two leaves left.
580. One she kept for herself,
581. the other she gave to the young man,
582. she said, “You go that way,
583. I’ll go this way.
584. See you here in a week.
585. If you go home,
586. *don’t let anyone kiss you.*
587. If you are kissed you will forget me.”
588. The young man ran his way,
589. Anwen ran hers,
590. as she ran she heard a little sound.
591. She looked behind her—

592. and there was the witch, stretching out her gray, spidery hand for Anwen's hair.
593. Anwen *threw* the leaf behind her,
594. it fluttered through the air,
595. it landed in the grass, between the two of them.
596. The witch was running even swifter than thought,
597. she could not turn her foot, and so—
598. *stomp* she stepped on the leaf and turned into a sow.
599. (Laughter)
600. And that was the end of the witch.
601. The young man went home.
602. As he walked up the drive, his dog smelled him.
603. The dog was so excited
604. to smell its master!
605. It rushed across, it lifted itself up, put its paws on the young man's chest,
606. *and licked the young man's face.*
607. (Audience murmurs. "Oh no" is heard.)
608. His father looked out the window.
609. There was his son.
610. He ran outside, he embraced his child,
611. he said "Thank God,
612. thank God you've returned, you've been gone so long!
613. You hadn't written,
614. I was so *afraid* that something dreadful had happened to you.
615. Tell me,
616. *where*
617. have you been?"
618. ...
619. "I don't know where I've been," said the young man...
620. "I don't know my name!
621. I can't remember anything!"
622. After a week, Anwen returned to the crossroads,
623. *no one came to meet her.*
624. So she went back to the cottage,
625. where she'd lived with her mother.
626. As she approached it,
627. she saw no smoke..coming out the chimney,
628. no hens
629. scratching in the yard outside.
630. She pushed open the door...
631. and saw...

632. her mother.
633. In the bed.
634. Cold.
635. And still.
636. After she had buried her mother, she could not bear to be in that place.
637. She took to wandering.
638. She had no family.
639. No money.
640. She had to sleep under hedges,
641. and sheds, and outhouses,
642. until her hair
643. was clogged with twigs and leaves,
644. until her clothes were no more than greasy rags.
645. Until she'd worn away her shoes.
646. At last she came to a village where an old man took pity on her.
647. Gave her tea to drink, bread to eat.
648. He said,
649. "I have had an idea!
650. Outside the village,
651. there is a house, we call it the *weeping house*.
652. It's said,
653. if any young woman
654. can make the young man in that house smile,
655. she can marry him.
656. You should go there
657. and try your luck."
658. *Bell*
659. When the story ended,
660. you remember the young man sitting at the end of his bed?
661. He wasn't crying.
662. He was smiling.
663. He looked at his clenched fist,
664. he opened his hand, and...
665. *Morden opens his hand to reveal a single green leaf*
666. (Gasps, murmuring)
667. (Applause)

VITA

CHELISE FOX

- Education: Lone Peak High School, Highland, Utah
B.A., Philosophy, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
2013
M.A. Reading, Storytelling Concentration, East Tennessee State
University, Johnson City, Tennessee 2018
- Professional Experience: Legal Assistant, The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty,
Washington, DC 2015-2018
Graduate Teaching Assistant, East Tennessee State University,
College of Arts & Sciences, 2013-2014
Teaching Assistant, Brigham Young University, College of
Humanities, 2008-2011
- Honors and Awards: ETSU College of Arts & Sciences, Department of
Communication and Performance, “Outstanding
Contribution by a Graduate Student” award, 2015
Dan Crowley Memorial Essay Prize, 2014
American Folklore Society Storytelling Section
National Storytelling Network Next Generation Conference
Scholarship, 2014
BYU Phi Kappa Phi Research Paper Competition,
First Place, Senior Division, 2009